

THE MIGRATION OF HIGHLANDERS INTO LOWLAND SCOTLAND

(c. 1750-1890)

WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO GREENOCK

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with investigating the migration of Highlanders into Lowland Scotland in the period 1750-1850, with particular reference to the town of Greenock in Renfrewshire. Evidence is produced to show that increasingly close contacts were being established between the peoples of Renfrewshire and the neighbouring Highland areas from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, and that the settlement of Highlanders in numbers in Greenock began as early as the seventeenth century. Men and women of all ranks of Highland society apparently settled in Greenock during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and by the 1790s somewhere between 20% and 30% of the town's population had been born in the Highlands. Throughout the nineteenth century substantial migration from the Highlands to Greenock continued, the areas closer to the town sending the greater number of settlers, but certain more distant regions sending a proportionately higher number of migrants.

A detailed examination was made of the experiences of the Highland migrants in their new community, the Old Parochial Registers and the Census Enumeration Books from 1851 to 1891 providing much of the essential data. It appeared that the Highlanders in Greenock had quite definite occupational preferences, and that many of them were employed in semi-skilled

work and gravitated to the lower ranks of local society; but, on the other hand, Highlanders were also to be found in almost every type of occupation and industry in the town and in all orders of society. Many Highland migrants and their children, indeed, rose very rapidly to positions of eminence and responsibility in the community. The Highland settlers also established Highland schools, churches and societies, but they did not create a specifically Highland area or ghetto, and in the main they very quickly conformed to and became a part of the general social, cultural and community life of the town. There was some prejudice displayed by the local citizens against the newcomers from the Highlands, but this was not intense enough to prevent more than one-third of the Highlanders marrying members of other groups or to slow down the very rapid process whereby they abandoned their language and background and were assimilated into the general community.

It was illustrated also that the factors causing migration from the Highlands were extremely complex. Economic motives were clearly very important, but there were many aspects of Highland society and the community life in the Highlands which also induced large numbers of people to leave their homes. The influence and pull of the opportunities available in the Lowlands was another vital factor, as were the special ties and relationships that were formed between particular districts in the Highlands and certain towns and

areas in the Lowlands.

The Highland migrants in Greenock and other parts of the Lowlands, it is asserted, had a very considerable impact and influence on the development of the Scottish economy and on the social and cultural life and institutions of the Lowland communities. The Highlanders, too, it seems, were a most important element in the population of the Central Lowlands of Scotland in modern times. By their presence in large numbers in the Lowlands they facilitated the transference into the national consciousness of the traditions and myths of their Highland background, thereby helping to preserve a sense of identity among modern Scots and to prevent their assimilation into other cultures.

PREFACE

I should like to express my gratitude to the many people who made this investigation possible. Professor Donaldson and Mr. John Simpson, my tutors, provided invaluable guidance, comments and wise counsel on many aspects of the work, while Dr. W. Ferguson in his seminars opened up many fruitful lines of approach. I should also like to express my gratitude to the staffs of the National Library of Scotland and of the Scottish Record Office for their assistance and unflinching courtesy, and my warmest appreciation to the Librarian and staff of New Register House for their labours in furnishing me with so much of the essential data for this investigation. A large number of people in Greenock, too, gave willingly of their time and knowledge to further my studies. These included several of the ministers and Session Clerks of the local churches, the Manager of the Provident Bank, the officials of the Town Chamberlain's Department, the staff of the Watt Library, and in particular the Deputy Librarian and staff of the Greenock Public Library. The thesis also owes more than could possibly be conceived to the labours and writings of the many scholars mentioned in the Bibliography and in the footnotes, but a special debt must be admitted to those historians who have in recent years revolutionised the study of the Highland economy and society, and who have pioneered the study of population movements in Scotland.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- A.P.S. = Acts of the Parliament of Scotland.
- Census Report(s) = Census of Great Britain, 1841, 1851.
Census of Scotland, 1861-1961.
- G.A. = Greenock Advertiser.
- Greenock T.C.R. = Greenock Town Council Records.
- N.S.A. = The New Statistical Account of Scotland.
- O.P.R. = Old Parochial Registers.
- O.S.A. = The Statistical Account of Scotland.
- P.P. = Parliamentary Papers.
- Reg. Ho., = H.M. Register House, Edinburgh.
- Reports on British Fisheries = Reports from the Committee appointed to enquire into the state of the British Fisheries, and into the most effectual means for their Improvement and Extension, 1785-86, P.P. (First Series), Vol. X.
- Reports on British Herring Fisheries = Reports from the Committee appointed to enquire into the state of the British Herring Fisheries, and into the most effectual means for their Improvement and Extension, 1798-1800, P.P. (First Series), Vol. X.
- R.P.C. = Register of the Privy Council of Scotland
- S.C. = Sheriff Court.
- S.H.R. = The Scottish Historical Review.

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INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF THESIS

INTRODUCTION

Although it has been asserted that "the major connecting link of all Scottish history since 1707 is the transformation of a country where most were engaged in agricultural pursuits to one where most lived in a highly industrialised belt in the Lowlands",¹ the movement of people into the Lowland cities and towns has been surprisingly neglected by historians. The settling of Irish men and women in Scotland and other parts of the United Kingdom has been the subject of some close and detailed study,² but the migration of peoples from the rural areas of Scotland to the towns has not been examined exhaustively. In particular the settlement of Highlanders in the cities and towns of the Lowlands from the eighteenth century on, described by Professor Donaldson as "perhaps the greatest of all internal migrations within Scotland",³ has received scant attention. It is true that D.F. MacDonald in his Scotland's Shifting Population, 1770-1850 and Malcolm Gray in his The Highland Economy, 1750-1850 did concern themselves

1. R.H. Campbell, 'The Industrial Revolution', in S.H.R., Vol. 46 (1967), pp. 37-8.

2. See J.E. Handley, The Irish in Scotland, 1798-1845; J.E. Handley, The Irish in Modern Scotland; J.A. Jackson, The Irish in Britain.

3. G. Donaldson, The Scots Overseas, p. 48.

with the main elements and outlines, but there have been few if any studies to compare with the detailed investigations carried out by American historians into the patterns, motivations, effects and ramifications of migration into and within their own country.¹ Much more attention has been paid to the dramatic shipping of the Highlanders to the lands and colonies overseas, even although "the truly effective loss of population" from the Highlands "was not in the departure of the emigrant ship.....but in the silent and steady and unplanned shifting, mainly of the border population towards.... the Lowlands".²

The result of this failure of serious historians to study and investigate the movement of Highlanders to the Lowlands has been a too ready acceptance of numerous stories, prejudices and half-truths. Thus the most frequently painted picture is that of hordes of poor, starving and unwilling clansmen being driven from their glens to live miserable lives in the fever-ridden slums of the Lowland towns,³ and no indication is often given that a few might perhaps have been eager to move. Even very reputable

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1. See M.A. Jones, American Immigration (Chicago, 1960), pp. 325-41, Suggested Reading; W. Isard, Methods of Regional Analysis (New York, 1960), pp. 51-79.
 2. M. Gray, The Highland Economy, 1750-1850, p. 64.
 3. See O.S.A., Vol. 4, p. 575 (Strachur); A. Brown, The History of Cowal, p. 184; H. MacDonald, Life at the Coast (Glasgow, 1857), p. 90; H. McKechnie, The Lamont Clan, 1235-1935, p. 21.

historians, moreover, seem guilty of repeating some of the popular impressions that have been broadcast concerning the relations between the people of the Lowlands and the incoming Highlanders. D.F. MacDonald, for instance, stated that "the Highlanders were regarded by the natives of the towns almost as aliens", and that the migrants "had the habit of regarding themselves strangers in a strange land" and of keeping "themselves apart in some ways from their Lowland neighbours".¹ More recently Professor Hanham has echoed this view by claiming that there was "a sort of duality about Scottish city life, the Highlanders tending to keep very much to themselves".² It need hardly be said that no real evidence has been produced to support these views and opinions.

This thesis, therefore, is an attempt to undertake a critical study of the migration of Highlanders to the Lowlands: to examine the nature and extent of the movement, to investigate its motivation, to study in depth the experiences of the Highland migrants in the Lowland towns, and to measure their impact on Lowland and Scottish society. Since, however, a study in depth and in detail of the whole range of Highland migration to the Lowlands would be beyond the scope of such an investigation, it was decided to concentrate on the movement of Highlanders to one particular place. After

1. D.F. MacDonald, Scotland's Shifting Population, p. 72.

2. H.J. Hanham, Scottish Nationalism (London, 1969), pp. 18-19.

some deliberation, the town of Greenock in Renfrewshire was chosen for this purpose.

It might be felt by some observers that Glasgow with its large Highland population in modern times would have been perhaps the most suitable area for study, but it soon emerged that it had certain serious disadvantages. The rapid growth of the city's population in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to a total of 329,097 in 1851 and 658,198 in 1891,¹ for example, made it rather large and unwieldy for an investigation involving depth studies of the Highland migrants and their experiences in the community, at least for the resources that could be deployed by any one research worker. Greenock, on the other hand, having a very much smaller population,² is and has been of such a size as to make depth studies a much more practicable and feasible proposition. It would appear, moreover, that the percentage of Highland-born persons in the population of Greenock has been greater throughout the modern period than that in Glasgow.³ The description of Greenock in The Statistical Account of Scotland refers to the very large Highland element in its population,⁴ and from that time onwards there has been such a substantial and continuing migration of Highlanders into the town that it

1. Census Reports, 1851 and 1891.

2. See Tables 1, 8.

3. See Table 62.

4. O.S.A., Vol. 5, p. 571.

has been as much "noted for its Celticism as for its rainfall".¹

In other ways, too, Greenock seemed an excellent choice for the type of investigation here envisaged. It is a reasonably distinct and homogeneous burgh, and though it does indeed form part of a Clydeside economic and sociological complex centred on Glasgow, it has a sufficiently separate identity and administration to warrant individual and detailed study. In the relevant historical sources such as the Old Parochial Registers, the various Statistical Accounts, the Kirk Session Records, the Town Council Records, and the Census Reports and Census Enumeration Books Greenock is also treated as a distinct unit. The experience and history of the town from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries, moreover, reflects the social, commercial and industrial history of Lowland Scotland.² In Greenock, too, as in many other towns in Central Scotland, large numbers of Irish migrants arrived in the nineteenth century to supplement the Highland migrants and in some areas to replace them.³

It would seem also that the presence and experiences of the Highland migrants in Greenock inspired the same popular

1. W.H. Marwick, Economic Developments in Victorian Scotland (London, 1936), p. 131.

2. See pp. 9-15 for History of Greenock.

3. Census Reports, 1841-91.

stories that were so commonly associated with the Highlanders throughout Lowland Scotland. Burns' Highland Mary came to the town and died there of fever, and commentators have seen her death as the classic example of the fate awaiting so many Highlanders in the slums of the Lowland towns and cities.

"Many have been the deaths of the young and beautiful which have taken place in such vile localities....," wrote H.

MacDonald, for example, in his Life at the Coast. "Many a

poor nameless Highland Mary has thus been pushed into an

untimely grave, and thus has many a stalwart chiel been laid

prostrate in the very pride of his manhood."¹ Others have

detected in the grim housing conditions in the locality the

influence of the low Highland housing standards,² while

local tradition often likes to explain the periodic outbreaks

of violence in the burgh by referring to the mixed Irish and

Highland elements in the population. Some observers have been

even more fanciful and have sought to establish a connection

between the prevalence of tuberculosis in the town³ and the

arrival of settlers from the Highlands.⁴

Thus it was that Greenock seemed an eminently suitable

1. H. MacDonald, Life at the Coast (1857), pp. 90-1.

2. T.W. Hamilton, How Greenock Grew, p. 14.

3. For incidence of tuberculosis in Greenock, see The Third Statistical Account of Scotland, Vol. XI, p. 162.

4. Hamilton, op. cit., p. 14.

place for studying all the many problems associated with the migration of Highlanders to the Lowlands, and for investigating the stories and prejudices that have grown up around this movement of peoples. The period originally chosen was 1750-1890,¹ for most of the authorities seemed to be agreed that "from shortly after mid-century (18th century) the east and south (Highlands) were losing considerably by net emigration",² but it soon became apparent that the movement of Highlanders to Greenock had commenced much earlier.³ For this reason it was decided to begin the investigation at an earlier period and to determine, if possible, the dates when Highlanders first began settling in Greenock. Nevertheless, it was felt that the main emphasis of the investigation should still be directed towards the period 1750-1890 when the movement of Highlanders to Greenock was linked to that transformation of Scotland described by Professor Campbell.⁴ An analysis of the migration of Highlanders and of their experiences in such a Lowland town as Greenock might indeed, it was hoped, be an important contribution to our understanding of the forces and processes that brought about that transformation.

1. 1891 is the most recent date for such sources as the Census Enumeration Books to which the general public is allowed access (1969).

2. Gray, op. cit., p. 64.

3. See pp. 54-7.

4. See p. 2.

HISTORY OF GREENOCK

Since this thesis is concerned very largely with the town of Greenock, it is clearly of some importance that the main stages of its history and development up to about the end of the nineteenth century should be outlined. Greenock is a town of relatively recent origin, for as "a potential centre of population and commerce it came into existence near the close of the sixteenth century".¹ Somewhere about the middle of the sixteenth century, small communities of fishermen had begun to appear along the Bay of St. Lawrence,² but initially these were merely clachans, not perhaps always permanently occupied.³ Thus when in 1592 an Act of the Scottish Parliament was passed ratifying a charter granted to the local laird, Sir John Schaw, authorising him to build a church for the accommodation of his tenants and the inhabitants of his lands, no reference was made to any town or village in the area.⁴ With the erection of the Old West Church of Greenock in 1591,⁵ however, and the disjunction of a new parish of Greenock from

1. R.H. Smith, The History of Greenock, p. 17. (See note in Bibliography).

2. See Map 1.

3. Smith, op. cit., p. 17; Ian A.G. Kinniburgh, 'Greenock: Growth and Change in the Harbours of the Town', in The Scottish Geographical Magazine, Vol. 76 (1960), p. 39.

4. A.P.S., Vol. III, pp. 549-50.

5. N. Hill, The Story of the Old West Kirk of Greenock, p. 7.

the parish of Inverkip in 1594,¹ the small communities developed rapidly into the settlements of Greenock and Crawforddyke (or Cartdyke). The latter was for a time a separate burgh of barony,² but it was soon overshadowed by Greenock and was eventually brought within the Greenock burgh boundaries in 1840.³ In the Church records and other sources it was treated as part of the Greenock parish(es), and in all the early counts of population its inhabitants were listed in the Greenock parishes.

During the seventeenth century, Greenock made steady progress. In 1636 it became a burgh of barony and obtained the right to hold a weekly market and three fairs each year.⁴ Factories for manufacturing soap and curing red herring were established,⁵ and by the 1670s Greenock had become one of the "four main centres of the Scottish herring industry".⁶ There were as yet no proper harbours, but Crawforddyke was of sufficient importance to be used as a port of departure by some ships taking part in the Darien Expedition in 1697.⁷

1. A.P.S., Vol. IV, p. 75.

2. G.S. Pryde, The Burghs of Scotland (London, 1965), p. 74.

3. 3 Victoria, c. 27.

4. A.P.S., Vol. V, p. 440 (charter confirmed in 1641).

5. G. Donaldson, Scotland: James V to James VII, p. 391.

6. T.C. Smout, Scottish Trade on The Eve of Union, 1660-1707, p. 6.

7. Smith, op. cit., p. 192; Kinniburgh, op. cit., p. 90.

Early in the eighteenth century, Greenock's first harbour was constructed,¹ and after the Union of 1707 the port's trade steadily expanded. It played an important part in the tobacco trade,² while in the second half of the century it became one of the principal centres of the herring buss fishings.³ The loss of the American colonies disrupted the trade of Greenock for a time, but it quickly recovered its prosperity, the West Indies trade becoming particularly important.⁴ In the 1780s a new graving dock was built,⁵ and by the end of the century Greenock had become the largest and most important port in Scotland.⁶

Although at this period Greenock was still principally a commercial centre and port, some industries were already developing. As early as 1711, John Scott began building herring busses and small boats in the town, and steadily the firm that he founded expanded till it became one of the great shipbuilding companies of the world.⁷ Sugar refining

1. Smith, op. cit., p. 120; Kinniburgh, op. cit., p. 90.
2. H. Hamilton, An Economic History of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century (London, 1965), p. 250.
3. Ibid., pp. 124, 289 (Table VIII).
4. Ibid., p. 287; Kinniburgh, op. cit., pp. 90, 92.
5. Greenock T.C.R., June 6, 1784; Kinniburgh, op. cit., p. 90.
6. Hamilton, op. cit., pp. 287, 289 (Table VIII).
7. Two Hundred and Fifty Years of Shipbuilding by the Scotts at Greenock (Glasgow, 1961).

was begun in the town in 1765, and by 1802 three refineries were in production.¹ There were also by that date a glass works, a rope and sail manufactory, a grain mill, a woollen mill, a soap work, a candle work, and several other small manufactories.²

With the increase in trade and the growth of small industries throughout the eighteenth century, Greenock's population increased considerably. In 1627 there had probably been about 800 people in the parish of Greenock,³ and in 1695 a little over 1300,⁴ but by 1741 the number of inhabitants had risen to 4,100.⁵ In 1741 a new parish was erected, and the population figures recorded for the two parishes combined at various times throughout the remainder of the eighteenth century were 3,858 in 1755,⁶ 15,000 in 1792,⁷ and 17,458 in 1801.⁸ As the town grew larger, the Superior

1. John M. Hutchason, Notes on the Sugar Industry of the United Kingdom, pp. 47-50.
2. O.S.A., Vol. 5, p. 580.
3. Reports on the State of Certain Parishes in Scotland (1627) (Maitland Club, M 34), p. 190.
4. The Poll Tax Rolls of the Parishes of Renfrewshire for the Year 1695, compiled by D. Semple (Paisley, 1864).
5. N.S.A., Vol. VII, p. 426; Smith, op. cit., p. 298.
6. J.G. Kyd, Scottish Population Statistics, p. 31.
7. O.S.A., Vol. 5, p. 571.
8. Census Report, 1851.

came to relinquish some of his powers. In 1741 he granted a charter allowing the feuars and sub-feuars to appoint nine managers of the public funds;¹ and ten years later in 1751 he granted a second charter giving the feuars and sub-feuars the privilege of electing two baillies, a treasurer and six councillors having full powers to manage the affairs of the town and to maintain peace and good order.²

In the early decades of the nineteenth century, the trade and commerce of Greenock remained very prosperous. New docks were opened,³ and when the East India Company's monopoly of the East India trade was ended in 1813,⁴ Greenock merchants and shipowners were quick to take advantage of this new opportunity. Other markets opened up to Greenock merchants were the countries of South America, while the emigration of the early years of the nineteenth century provided a fillip to Greenock shipping and mercantile interests.⁵ The growing importance of the town was given statutory recognition in 1833 when it was created a municipal⁶ and

1. Smith, op. cit., p. 22.

2. Greenock T.C.R., September 9, 1751; Smith, op. cit., pp. 22-4.

3. Kinniburgh, op. cit., p. 92.

4. S.G. Checkland, The Rise of Industrial Society in England, 1815-85 (London, 1964), pp. 110-11.

5. Smith, op. cit., pp. 195-6; Kinniburgh, op. cit., p. 94.

6. 3 & 4 William IV, c. 77.

parliamentary burgh,¹ and thereafter it was governed by a provost, four baillies, a treasurer and sixteen councillors.

Soon after this date, however, Greenock's trade suffered serious reverses. The herring fishings experienced a decline, while the deepening of the Clyde and the coming of steamships resulted in more and more ships by-passing Greenock and sailing direct to Glasgow.² In the 1850s and 1860s there was still a thriving shipping trade, particularly in sugar and timber, but the days of the port's supremacy were rapidly vanishing.³ To a certain extent this decline in the shipping and mercantile interests of Greenock was compensated for by continued growth in the town's industries. The basic industries of shipbuilding and sugar were expanding, while important engineering and foundry works, woollen mills, cotton mills, ropeworks, tanneries, potteries and many other industries had also been established.⁴ The growth of these industries was accompanied by a growth in the town's population from 17,458 in 1801 to 37,436 in 1851, 57,146 in 1871, and 68,142 in 1901.⁵

1. 2 & 3 William IV, c. 65.

2. Kincaidburgh, op. cit., pp. 95-6; Smith, op. cit., pp. 191, 145.

3. R.H. Osborne, 'The Movements of People in Scotland, 1851-1951', in Scottish Studies, Vol. 2 (1955), p. 22.

4. N.S.A., Vol. VII, pp. 433-44.

5. Census Reports. Figures for the Greenock parishes to 1851, and for the burgh thereafter. See note, Table 1.

The progress of Greenock was slowed somewhat in the latter years of the nineteenth century, for the major industries of sugar refining and shipbuilding were experiencing sharp competition from overseas countries in this period. There was some recovery in the first two decades of the twentieth century with the naval race and the international agreement for the elimination of sugar bounties in 1902.¹ After 1918, however, Greenock suffered severely in the slump and depression of the inter-war years. It had failed to diversify into the more expansive and growth industries to any great extent, and it therefore remained an industrial town of the second rank. Since 1945, however, the town has witnessed some diversification with the establishment, for instance, of a large factory by I.B.M. for the assembly of electric typewriters and computers.² The port has also been developed in recent years with the construction of a large graving dock³ and a container terminal.⁴ Nevertheless, unemployment has remained high, and the town's population has slowly declined to 74,560 in 1961 from a peak of 81,123 it had reached in 1921.⁵

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1. W.H. Marwick, Scotland in Modern Times (London, 1964), p. 100.
 2. The Third Statistical Account of Scotland, Vol. XI, p. 170.
 3. Kemp's Greenock and District Local Directory, 1968 (London, 1968), map and frontispiece.
 4. Britain in 1969 - An Official Handbook (H.M.S.O., 1969), pp. 327-8.
 5. Census Reports.

THE HIGHLAND AREA

The definition and delimitation of the Highland area from which migrants came to the town of Greenock presented certain difficulties for the purposes of this investigation. The four Highland counties of Argyll, Inverness, Ross and Cromarty and Sutherland have normally been accepted as being within the Highland area, but the traditional Highland line as described by Skene¹ intersected the counties of Dunbarton, Stirling, Perth, Forfar, Aberdeen, Banff, Moray and Nairn. By and large Skene's definition of the Highland districts of these counties was accepted, but the reports for the various parishes in The Statistical Account of Scotland were consulted to determine whether they were considered Highland in the late eighteenth century, and whether the main language was Gaelic. This last factor was held to be particularly important, and the writer leant on it heavily in coming to a decision whether or not to accept certain parishes as Highland.

From these various considerations and studies, the following areas were classified as Highland for the purposes of this thesis:

- a) The counties of Argyll, Inverness, Ross and Cromarty and Sutherland.
- b) Dunbarton: the parishes of Luss, Arrochar, Rosneath and Rhu.

1. W.F. Skene, Celtic Scotland (Edinburgh, 1886-90), Vol. III, pp. 285-7; see map 2.

- b) Dunbarton (Cont.): In the nineteenth century the burgh of Helensburgh was omitted from the parish of Rhu, for it is essentially a Lowland town.
- One further guide to the Highland area of Dunbarton was discovered in the Disarming Act of 1746¹ where it was stated that "that part of the Shire....which lies upon the East, West and North sides of Lochlomond to the Northward of the Point where the Water of Leven runs from Loch Lomond" was subject to its provisions.
- c) Stirling: the parishes of Buchanan and Drymen.
- d) Perth: all the parishes north and west of a line which includes the parishes of Aberfoyle, Callander, Comrie, Monzievaird, Crieff, Monzie, Little Dunkeld, Clunie, Blairgowrie and Alyth.
- e) Forfar: Glenisla.
- f) Aberdeen: Glenmuick, Crathie and Braemar, Strathdon and Glenbuchat.
- g) Banff: Inveravon, Kirkaichael, Aberlour, Mortlach and Cabrach.
- h) Moray and Nairn: Ardelach, Cawdor and Knockando. Till 1870 - Abernethy and Duthil. After 1870 - Cromdale, Inverallan and Advie.

1. 9 Geo. II. c. 39.

The area of the parish chosen to distinguish between Highland and Lowland districts in certain counties was not always completely satisfactory, however, for some of the parishes seem also to have been intersected by the boundary between Highlands and Lowlands. Nevertheless, any discrepancies or errors that occurred were not at all very serious in the context of this thesis, for the greater number of the Highland migrants settling in Greenock were born in Argyll.¹ A substantial number did indeed come from the Dunbarton parishes of Rhu and Rosneath, and from the counties of Inverness and Ross and Cromarty, but only relatively small numbers came from Stirling, Perth, Forfar, Aberdeen, Banff, Moray and Nairn. Some further consideration of the border line would perhaps be necessary if an investigation were being made into the activities of Highlanders in Glasgow, Perth, Stirling or other towns which drew substantially from these counties. The parish of Glenisla in Forfar, for instance, was probably not really Highland in the modern period. It would be within Skene's Highland Line, but only a very few people there seem to have spoken Gaelic in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.²

1. See Table 15.

2. N.S.A., Vol. XI, p. 429.

BUTE

The county of Bute comprising the islands of Bute, Arran and the Cumbraes was not included in the Highland area for the purposes of this investigation. Arran was perhaps substantially a Highland island in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but traditionally Bute has been considered separately from the Highlands, and in the early nineteenth century a local historian of the island declared that the inhabitants termed "themselves Butemen in contradistinction to both Lowlanders and Highlanders".¹ Nevertheless, the ties and contacts between the Highlands and Bute have always been very close, and indeed in the late eighteenth century Gaelic was still the principal language of the majority of the inhabitants of the two parishes on the island.² A count for the county of Bute has therefore invariably been included in the various tables throughout this thesis for purposes of comparison. At the individual level, too, the migrants from Bute have been considered as being closely related to the Highlanders, and indeed many of them were descended from Highlanders who had moved from Argyll into Bute.

1. Plain's History of Bute, Ed. Rev. W. Ross (Rothesay, 1830), p. 8.

2. O.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 304, 311.

HIGHLAND MIGRANTS IN GREENOCK

Some confusion might perhaps arise as to which persons in the population of Greenock should be considered as Highlanders, but throughout this investigation only the first generation Highlanders have been classified as migrants. Thus the term 'Highland migrants', unless otherwise stated, is taken to mean those persons who had been born in the Highland area already specified and who had settled in Greenock or in some other place outside the Highlands. The children of these migrants if born in Greenock or some other reception area were classified as local-born, although in certain sections of the thesis the experiences of the descendants of the original migrants were investigated to discover if they displayed any special tendencies or characteristics.

N.B. SPELLING

The spelling used for the various Highland place names is that given in Place Names and Population, Scotland, General Register Office, Edinburgh (H.M.S.O., 1967).

PLAN AND SCOPE OF THESIS

The thesis has been arranged into four sections:

- I The Pattern of Migration from the Highlands to Greenock.
- II The Experiences of the Highland Migrants in Greenock.
- III An Analysis of the Factors Causing Migration from the Highlands.
- IV The Impact of the Highland Migrants on Greenock and on Lowland Society.

In Section III the factors hitherto put forward as producing migration from the Highlands will be examined in the light of the pattern of migration to Greenock and the experiences of the Highlanders in the town. No attempt will be made to deal with this topic exhaustively, but rather attention will be focused on evaluating existing theories and on suggesting new approaches to the problem.

SECTION I

THE PATTERN OF MIGRATION FROM THE HIGHLANDS TO GRASS OR

CHAPTER 1

CONTACTS BETWEEN GREENOCK AND THE HIGHLANDS

From the very beginnings of Greenock's history, there have been many and varied contacts between the town and the Highlands. Situated as it is on the estuary of the Clyde with the Highland areas of Argyll and Dunbarton only a short distance away across the river, Greenock could at all times be reached quite easily from the opposite shores. There were relatively short routes across the river from the Lennox and Dunbartonshire to the neighbourhood of Newark (Port Glasgow), from Rosneath Point to Greenock, and from Argyll and Dunoon to the area where the Cloch Lighthouse now stands.

By most writers and historians it has been generally assumed that the earliest contacts between the Highlanders and the Lowlands were of a hostile nature, and that up until the sixteenth century these various routes and others were used mainly by raiders and reivers. Professor Lythe refers to "the cleavage between Highland and Lowland" in the sixteenth century, and quotes John Major's distinction between "the 'Wild Scots' of the north and west, and the 'Householding Scots' of the Lowlands".¹ The historian of the Lamont clan,

1. S.G.E. Lythe, The Economy of Scotland, 1550-1625, pp. 2-3.

a clan inhabiting the lands and shores of Cowal, speaks of the Firth of Clyde as a "gulf...set betwixt the Lamont country and the Lowlands.....a gulf not lightly crossed, dividing two civilisations".¹ He refers to the hostile relations existing between the peoples on the opposite shores of the Firth of Clyde in early centuries, and asserts that though the Lamonts were not completely isolated from the Lowlands, "their visits were infrequent and perhaps unwelcome".²

There is indeed some support for this traditional view of the Highlanders as a hostile people preying on the Lowlands in the records and story of the Clyde area. In the 1570s, for instance, a party of Highlanders from Argyll raided in Kilmacola parish. Two local lairds, the Earl of Glencairn and the laird of Duchal, were engaged in a bitter feud, and Glencairn managed to persuade a party of clansmen to assist him. They crossed the Firth of Clyde to the Cloch area, and then moved inland to Kilmacola where they attacked Duchal's farm. Most of the raiders escaped, but about nine or ten were captured and later hanged at the Grassmarket in Edinburgh.³ Greenock itself, moreover, seems to have suffered attacks from the Highlands during the seventeenth century. George Williamson, a local historian, declared that in this period "the district was

1. H. McMechnie, The Lamont Clan, p. 13.

2. Ibid., p. 20.

3. G.A., June 24, 1856.

disturbed by the outlawed clan of MacGregor from the opposite shore of the river", but he patriotically assured his readers that "the traders marshalled themselves under the Lord of the Manor, and successfully repelled the incursions of the marauders".¹

Nevertheless, although these various scraps of evidence indicate that attacks were being launched against Greenock and the southern shores of the Clyde even as late as the seventeenth century, the relationship between Highlanders and Lowlanders was already by the sixteenth century a much more complex one than that of simple hostility and enmity.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Argyll family came to play an increasingly important part in national affairs, and Highlanders from the county of Argyll were continuously involved in the affairs of their Lowland neighbours.² In the Civil Wars of the 1640s the followers and clansfolk of the Argyll family supported the Covenanters,³ while for a time the Lamonts were on the side of Montrose and the King.⁴ All these troubles meant that the people of Greenock would commonly see Highland forces

1. G. Williamson, Old Greenock (First Series), p. 240.

2. E.R. Cregeen, 'The Changing Role of the House of Argyll in the Scottish Highlands', in History and Social Anthropology, Ed. I.M. Lewis (London, 1968), pp. 155-59.

3. G. Donaldson, Scotland: James V to James VII, pp. 327-30, 333-4.

4. H. McKechnie, The Lamont Clan, p. 147.

passing their shores, while for some years later in the seventeenth century "the Earl of Argyll had a number of firelocks for the use of the Argyll Militia....in a cellar within the town".¹

In the first half of the eighteenth century the Argyll family and the Campbells were, if anything, even more influential in national affairs and politics, and for a time ^{Archibald} ~~Islay~~ Campbell, ^{Earl of Islay} ~~Campbell~~ was known as 'king of Scotland'.² On the local scene, several prominent Highlanders were freeholders in Renfrewshire in the eighteenth century, among them Daniel Campbell of Shawfield,³ Dougal Campbell of Carradale,³ Islay Campbell, Advocate,³ Sir James Campbell of Ardkinglass,³ Archibald Campbell of Succoth,³ and John Lament of Lament.⁴ Most probably these men would play an important part in county politics, and certainly their activities would bring them into close and often intimate contact with local landlords and citizens.

The contacts between the peoples on opposite shores of the Firth of Clyde were not all the result of war or politics, however, for even as early as the sixteenth century a considerable trade and commerce had sprung up between the two peoples. In 1565-6, for example, a group of Highlanders

1. G. Williamson, Old Cartaburn, p. 104.

2. W. Ferguson, Scotland: 1689 to the Present, p. 143.

3. Reg. Ho., S.C. Renfrewshire, Freeholders Record, Vol. 1765-85, pp. 251-55 (1775).

4. Ibid, pp. 475-79 (1785).

complained to the Privy Council that they had been molested while driving their "ky furth of Argyll to be sauld in the lawland".¹ In the same period, cheese and butter from the west Highlands and the islands were being sent to Glasgow and Dumbarton.²

When the first permanent settlements developed at Greenock towards the end of the sixteenth century, there is every reason to believe that commercial relations were quickly established between the inhabitants there and the people living across the Clyde. It is very probable that fishermen from Dumbarton, Argyll and the islands had been using the Bay of St. Lawrence and the neighbourhood as a temporary base for their fishings in the river for many years before this time, and they no doubt continued to use the facilities there after permanent communities were formed.³ Then as the number of inhabitants increased, Greenock must have provided a tempting market centre for the people from the neighbouring Highland areas. Early in the seventeenth century, we learn, Sir Coll Lamont of Ardlamont (1614-34) was doing regular business with Rothesay and the Lowlands, and his people were buying and selling goods in Greenock.⁴ Nor was trade confined merely to those

1. A.P.C., Vol. I, pp. 470-1.

2. S.G.E. Lythe, The Geography of Scotland, 1550-1625, p. 10.

3. R.M. Smith, The History of Greenock, pp. 17, 296.

4. H. Macneil, The Lamont Clan, p. 135.

Highland areas close to Greenock, for Tucker in 1655 described the inhabitants of Greenock as "all seamen or fishermen trading for Ireland or the Isles in open boats".¹

During the eighteenth century, trade between Greenock and the Highlands steadily expanded. The growing population of the town provided an increasingly attractive market for Highland farmers, and ships from the Highlands sailed regularly to Greenock with farm produce. In the Glasgow Courant, January 11, 1748, for example, appeared the following notice: "Greenock - January 9. Arrived the Janet, Porter, from Campbeltown, with Butter and Cheese, and sundry Vessels from Air with Herring." As early as 1718, moreover, Greenock merchants and tradesmen were purchasing Highland timber,² while later in the century Highland fishermen were using the facilities provided by the cooperages established in the town.³ Greenock butchers also went to farms in the Highland districts to buy cattle,⁴ while in the Greenock flesh market "two stalls were set apart for strangers with liberty to them to slaughter...on each Thursday weekly and to sell meat on the stalls on Friday".⁵ In the same period, too,

1. Thomas Tucker, in P. Hume Brown, Early Travellers in Scotland, p. 173.

2. H. McKechnie, Jamont Clan, pp. 263-4; cf. also Argyll Estate Instructions, Ed. E.R. Cregeen, p. 45.

3. R.M. Smith, The History of Greenock, pp. 190-1.

4. O.S.A., Vol. 4, p. 573 (Strachur).

5. Greenock T.C.R., May 22, 1764.

Greenock developed into an entrepot centre for the West Highlands, and local merchants came to supply an ever-widening area with an extensive range of goods. An interesting example of the scope of this trade in the 1770s is to be seen in the Journals of Alexander Bain and Company, merchants in Greenock, a company which found itself involved in a Court of Session action in 1783. It sold and despatched a wide range of foodstuffs, fruits, spices, crockery, cutlery, glassware, wines and brandy to customers in England, Lowland Scotland and the Highlands. In the Highlands there were customers in Ross, Uist, Barra, Mull, Tarras, Islay, and almost every part of mainland Argyll. Among the customers were lawyers, chirurgeons, merchants, ministers, and many of the landed families of Argyll and other Highland counties. These latter included Campbell of Dunterland in Islay, Coll Macdonald of Boisdale, MacNeill of Oronsay, Malcolm of Poltalloch, MacLean of Duart, Campbell of Skipness, Campbell of Duntroon, Campbell of Glendaruel, Lamont of Lamont, Mackenzie of Applecross, Campbell of Ballochyle, and many others.¹ Representatives of several of the families listed as customers, including the Malcolms of Poltalloch, the Campbells of Glendaruel, and the Campbells of Ballochyle, appear to have settled in Greenock

1. Reg. No., Court of Session Productions, Journal of Alexander Bain and Co., merchants, Greenock, 1772-4, RH 15/75.

shortly after this date.¹

Though merchants of the type of Alexander Bain were active in Greenock in the eighteenth century, much of the trading between the town and the Highlands continued to be carried on at the weekly markets and at the summer and winter fairs held each year. Even in the nineteenth century, writers referred to a "vast influx to our fairs of the inhabitants of the neighbouring highland districts".² Such fairs were held in several places along the shores of the Clyde, and Lettice in 1791 gave an excellent account of their purpose and value in his description of the fair at the Larga: "It was formerly supported by the mutual wants and superfluities of the Highland and Lowland inhabitants of Scotland, who met here, in countless multitudes for the purpose of bartering those different commodities, which each party were able to spare, for the benefit of the other. The sheep, horses, and black cattle of the northern and eastern Highlands, here met the manufactures and provisions of the opposite quarters."³

Much of the early trade and prosperity of Greenock was based on the herring fishings, and this activity also did much to strengthen the ties between the town and the Highlands. In the 1660s a curing yard was set up in the town,⁴ and no

1. See Table 10 and pp. 82-3.

2. G.A., July 4, 1823.

3. J. Lettice, Letters on a Tour through various parts of Scotland in the Year 1791 (London, 1794), p. 128.

4. Smith, op. cit., p. 188.

doubt fishermen from various parts of the Firth of Clyde and the Highlands landed their catches there.¹ The herring fishings also led to the development of foreign trade from Greenock. An English sailor named Barlow, who visited Greenock and Port Glasgow in 1675, wrote in his diary that "there are near a hundred boats belonging to these places which are only for catching of herrings... And this is all their traffic, which their own vessels carry into France and Spain and exchange for wine and salt and other commodities which they have occasion for".² Greenock was not of course a royal burgh, but even before the privileges exercised by the royal burghs were effectively ended in 1672,³ the town's merchants were able to evade the restrictions on their trade by ingeniously using the links that were being formed with Highland and other burghs to have themselves made burghesses of, for example, Renfrew and Inveraray.⁴

In the eighteenth century there was a remarkable expansion in the herring industry, and by 1788 there were at least 300 boats owned in Greenock active in the fishings.⁵

1. R.H. Smith, The History of Greenock, p. 188.

2. B. Lubbock, Barlow's Journal, Vol. I, pp. 265-6.

3. T.C. Smout, Scottish Trade on the Eve of Union, p. 17; A.P.S., Vol. VIII, pp. 63-4.

4. Records of the Convention of Royal Burghs, Vol. III, p. 510.

5. Smith, op. cit., p. 189.

With the formation of the Society of the Free British Fishery under an Act of 1749, and the granting of a bounty of 30s per ton on all fishing vessels between 20 and 80 tons,¹ many busses or decked vessels were fitted out. Greenock took an active share in this form of enterprise, 121 busses being cleared at the Greenock Customhouse and outports in 1789.² From all parts of the Clyde area and the West Highlands catches were taken to the town, cured and barrelled there, and then exported to Ireland, the Continent, the American colonies, and the West Indies. The trade continued well into the nineteenth century, but the movements of the herring shoals eventually became more erratic, and the freeing of the slaves in the West Indies cut off one of the most important markets.³

From an early date, Highlanders, too, had been active in the fishings. In 1536, for instance, the Campbells of Arkinglas, a family with property in Cowal, were granted an "assise alleca maris occidentalis a Pentland-firth usque ad le Mwle Galwidie, et infra omnes insulas, et adeo longe prout maris flumen decurrit in aquam de Clide extenden".⁴ As the

1. H. Hamilton, An Economic History of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century, p. 115; 23 Geo. II, c. 24.

2. Reg. Ho., Customs Accounts, Cash Accounts Vouchers, E 508/88/9, 89/9, 90/9 - calculations by the writer.

3. G.A., April 2, 1834; J. Thomson, The Value and Importance of the Scottish Fisheries (London, 1849), pp. 135-9.

4. Registrum Magni Sigilli Regum Scotorum, Vol. III, p. 357 (No. 1602).

industry expanded in the eighteenth century, and particularly after 1750, moreover, Rothesay and Campbeltown became prominent centres of the buss fishings. Soon the merchants of these burghs were cooperating with the merchants of Greenock to advance their mutual interests by forming pressure groups. Prominent among the memorialists submitting evidence to the Committee appointed to inquire into the state of the British Fisheries in 1785, for example, were "the Adventurers in the White Herring Fishing, residing in the Burghs of Rothesay and Campbeltown, and the Towns of Greenock and Port Glasgow",¹ and it was a joint committee containing representatives from each of these ports that had prepared their submissions. Partnerships were also formed by merchants in the various towns, John McKay, buss master and merchant in Rothesay, for instance, having a one-eighth share in the sloop Elizabeth of Greenock.² Farmers and Landowners in Bute, Kintyre and Lochfyneside also joined in the ventures and purchased shares in fishing busses.³

Many Highlanders of the lower classes, too, were engaged in the buss fishings, and indeed in 1790 some 89% of the crew

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1. Reports on British Fisheries, P.P. (First Series), Vol. X, p. 106.
 2. Reg. No., Commissariat of the Isles, Register of Testaments, Vol. 6, p. 312, February 6, 1792.
 3. Reports on British Fisheries, P.P. (First Series), Vol. X, p. 141; O.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 313 (Kingarth, Bute); Argyll Estate Instructions, Ed. E.R. Cregeen, p. 162.

members of the busses receiving bounty at the port of Greenock were Highland-born.¹ A substantial number of the men employed on the busses "were ...country shoemakers, weavers, labouring servants, etc."² and "along the coasts where the busses resort (Western Scotland), many of the inhabitants come every year from one or two hundred miles to hire on board the Busses at Rothesay, Campbeltown and other Fishing Ports".³ Large numbers of Highlanders in Argyll and the islands also fished from small boats in waters near their homes, and often they would sell their catches in ports and centres like Greenock.⁴ Many men from the Highlands also came to work in small boats sailing out of Greenock. "We have near 800 small vessels, four or five Highlanders in each, in the fishing in the most delightful river some miles over..." wrote a gentleman in Greenock to a friend in London in 1754.⁵

There were several other trades, industries and occupations which, like the herring fishings, brought

1. See Table 6.
2. Reports on British Fisheries, P.P., Vol. X, p. 141.
3. Reports on British Herring Fisheries, P.P., Vol. X, p. 212; O.S.A., Vol. 6, p. 263 (N. Knappdale); T. Pennant, Tour in in Scotland and Voyage to the Hebrides, 1772, p. 225.
4. J. Knox, A View of the British Empire, especially Scotland, Vol. II, p. 125.
5. R.M. Smith, The History of Greenock, pp. 188-90.

Highlanders to Greenock and other Lowland areas to seek temporary or seasonal employment. These included "public works...., cutting wood, manufacturing and harvest work".¹ A town such as Greenock which was expanding rapidly in the eighteenth century, and where many new buildings and docks were being constructed,² would almost certainly attract large numbers of temporary workers from the Highlands. Most of the Highland seasonal workers, however, went to harvest work, and many travelled each year to farms in the neighbourhood of Greenock and throughout Renfrewshire. One such worker was a certain Marion Smith from Glendaruel (1762-1861), who for most of her life journeyed annually to Houston and other parts of Renfrewshire. She frequently passed through Greenock, and became a well-known character there. After her shearing days were over, she continued to pay visits to Renfrewshire where she received sums of money from many patrons.³

Harvest workers from the Highlands continued to arrive in the Greenock area and other parts of the Lowlands for a considerable part of the nineteenth century,⁴ but from about the 1820s Irish reapers and harvest workers provided fierce

1. O.S.A., Vol. 4, p. 565 (Strachur); see also J. Knox, A Tour through the Highlands of Scotland and the Hebrida Isles, in 1736 (London, 1787), p. 60.

2. See p. 11.

3. G.A., January 29, 1861.

4. G.A., August 22, 1843.

competition to the Highlanders searching for employment.¹

Later Irish and Highland workers were also engaged in large numbers in the construction of railways in the Lowlands of Scotland. Many Highlanders worked on the line from Glasgow to Greenock in the late 1830s,² and on the line from Glasgow to Wemyss Bay in the 1860s.³

In addition to the economic advances being made in the Lowlands from the seventeenth century, there were also certain developments taking place in the Highlands that brought numbers of Highlanders into contact with the inhabitants of the Lowlands and the Greenock area. In the seventeenth century, for instance, Crown policy encouraged the planting of Lowland settlers in the Highlands, and successful efforts were made by the Earl of Argyll to introduce Lowlanders into Inveraray and the new burgh of Lochhead.⁴ Later in the century, after the Restoration, very large numbers of people from Ayrshire and Renfrewshire settled in Kintyre,⁵ and among these were probably several from the neighbourhood of Greenock.

In the eighteenth century, further contacts were made with the Lowlands as certain primary industries were developed

1. G.A., November 4, 1823; Inverness Courier, August 29, 1827.

2. G.A., February 19, 1839. 3. G.A., June 23, 1864.

4. G. Donaldson. Scotland: James V to James VII, p. 229.

5. A. McKerrall, Kintyre in the Seventeenth Century, passim.

in the Highland area. Many of the farmers of Rhu and Rosneath, for example, began to manufacture linen, and although they carried out most of the processes themselves, the cloth was sent to Greenock for heckling.¹ In the same period, too, some of the landed gentry in the Highlands began to build new mansion houses, and to execute the work they frequently engaged masons and wrights from the Lowlands. In 1760, for instance, a contract was drawn up between John Menilaus, mason in Greenock, and John Campbell of Balliveolan in Lismore for building a house.² Highland estate owners also engaged Lowland lawyers to help them conduct their affairs, the agent and receiver-general of the 5th Duke of Argyll in 1789, for example, being a certain James Ferrier, Writer to the Signet, the son of John Ferrier of Kirkland in Renfrewshire.³ Several Greenock writers were also employed by Highland clients. In 1776, for instance, Mrs. Susan Campbell, the widow of Colonel James Campbell, Captain of Dunoon, paid £0.15.6 to Patrick Campbell, writer in Greenock, for carrying out certain legal transactions.⁴ Greenock writers also appeared for their Highland clients before the ecclesiastical courts, and thus in 1818 Mr. Walter Turbet,

1. W.C. Maughan, Annals of Garelochside (Glasgow, 1857), p. 92.

2. Reg. No., Campbell of Balliveolan Papers, GD/13/82.

3. Argyll Estate Instructions, 1771-1805, Ed. H.R. Craguen (Scottish History Society, Edinburgh, 1964), p. 16, note 3.

4. Reg. No., Account Book of the Dunoon Estate of Susan Campbell, Widow of Colonel John Campbell, 1773-1845, GD 1/172.

writer in Greenock, represented James Lamont of Knockdow at a Presbyterial Enquiry.¹ In 1824, an elder in Inverchaolain engaged Archibald Yuill, writer in Greenock, to defend him before Dunoon Presbytery against a charge of adultery, and certainly he must have been delighted with the skill of his legal adviser when the charge was dismissed.²

Another activity which brought many Highlanders into contact with Greenock and its inhabitants was smuggling. The whole area of the Clyde estuary and the Western Isles was a veritable smugglers' paradise, and even after the stricter Customs service was introduced in 1707, smuggling continued on a considerable scale.³ A common pattern in the eighteenth century was for rum and brandy to be smuggled into the Greenock area on foreign-trading ships, and then for the spirits to be ferried to the surrounding districts. In 1742, for example, foreign spirits were seized on the coast of Cowal,⁴ while in 1747, one James Black, the son of the innkeeper at Otter Ferry on Loch Fyne, was apprehended in his yawl between Greenock and Gourock with casks of spirits.⁵ So common was the practice that a certain Peter McDougall of Lochgoilhead and formerly a

1. Reg. Ho., Dunoon Presbytery Records, Minutes, Vol. 7, June 2, 1818, CH 2/111/7.

2. Ibid, Vol. 8, February 10, 1824, CH 2/111/8.

3. See P.W.J. Riley, The English Ministers and Scotland, 1707-27 (London, 1964), p. 202.

4. H. McKechnie, The Lamont Clan, p. 292.

5. Ibid, p. 308.

merchant in Greenock could claim (and have his claim accepted by a jury) that a barrel of rum he had ferried from Greenock to Lochgoilhead was part of a smuggled cargo and not stolen from a cellar in Greenock as the prosecutor was asserting.¹

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries there was a thriving contraband trade in salt, and also a very extensive smuggling of illicitly distilled whisky from the Highlands into the Lowlands. The trade in salt grew out of "the indulgence of the Government in allowing it duty free for the fisheries",² but the smuggling of whisky was much more frequently reported in the Greenock area. In February, 1803, for instance, we hear of the landing at Greenock of a cargo of whisky "from the Highlands", and of a fight between the excisemen and six smugglers, three of whom were arrested.³ The excisemen were by no means always successful, however, and the following month they were outwitted by a resourceful smuggler. He was pushing a cask along the Greenock Quays, and when he was challenged by an exciseman, he declared that it was a barrel of herrings. Not surprisingly the exciseman refused to believe his story, but when he tried to

1. Reg. Ho., S.C. Renfrewshire, Criminal Records, Vol. 3, 1788-1816, August 24, 1791.

2. R. Southey, Journal of a Tour in Scotland in 1819 (London, 1929), p. 192; see also H. Miller, My Schools and Schoolmasters (Edinburgh, 1854), p. 183.

3. G.A., February 4, 1803.

open the cask, the smuggler resisted, and a crowd came to his assistance. The exciseman was forced to leave the scene, and by the time he returned with some of his colleagues, the smuggler had staved in the cask and "let fly" the spirits.¹

The various commercial contacts, both legal and illegal, that existed between Greenock and the Highlands led to the early development of embryo financial relations between the town and certain Highland districts. Highlanders with spare cash found opportunities for investment or the safe deposit of their money in Greenock. Some money was lodged with the town council, one John Gelly of the island of Bute, for example, lending £100 for building the Flesh Market and Slaughterhouse in 1764,² and Captain Colin Campbell of the revenue sloop, Prince of Wales, lending the council £500 on 19th October, 1761.³ Kirk Sessions also found Greenock a convenient place for depositing their funds, and some like the Session of Rosneath invested the parish poor's funds with Greenock merchants.⁴ Other Highlanders lodged their money with acquaintances or friends in Greenock upon some substantial security. Thus a certain "Janet McLachlane, widow of Hugh McLachlane, late Boatman at Cumbraes", informed the Customs officials that she desired to transmit the £50

1. G.A., March 4, 1803.

2. Greenock T.O.R., January 16, 1764. 3. Ibid, October 19, 1761.

4. Reg. Ho., Rosneath Kirk Session Records, Minutes, Vol. 1, p. 28, June 1, 1763, CH 2/504/1.

granted to her on her husband being killed on duty to "a Friend in Greenock who will give her Heritable Security upon a Stone Tenement in that Town to pay her the Interest of the Money at 5% per Annum half yearly".¹

For full banking facilities at this time, the inhabitants of Greenock and district had to travel to Glasgow, but in 1785 and 1802 respectively the Greenock Bank and the Renfrewshire Bank were founded.² Soon Highlanders were depositing their funds in these institutions. The accounts of Mrs. Susan Campbell of Dunoon, for instance, show that she had deposits in the Greenock Bank in 1792,³ while in 1802, Duncan McCorkindale, a sailor from Campbeltown, arrived in Greenock and deposited £300 at 4% in the Greenock Bank and £30 at 4% with the Renfrewshire Bank.⁴ Later in 1815 the Greenock Provident Bank was founded to provide a banking service for the poorer sections of the community, and during the first four years of its existence, accounts were opened by people living in Rosneath, Dunoon, Rothesay, Cumbræ, Glenfinnart, Inveraray, Craignish, Campbeltown and Oban.⁵

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1. Reg. Ho., Scottish Board of Customs, Minute Books, Vol. 15, July 14, 1778, CE 1/15.
 2. R.M. Smith, The History of Greenock, p. 366.
 3. Reg. Ho., Account Book of the Dunoon Estate of Susan Campbell, Widow of Colonel John Campbell, 1773-1845, GD 1/172.
 4. D. Colville, 'The Diary of a Campbeltown Baillie, 1793-1802', Being a Paper Contributed to the Transactions of the Kintyre Antiquarian Society, 1930, in Argyll, Vol. 2 (Nat. Lib., NE.7.d.1.8), p. 15.
 5. Greenock Provident Bank Ledgers, 1815-19.

Increasingly, therefore, the Highland areas of Argyll, Dunbarton and the Western Islands were being brought into closer economic contact with Greenock. In 1745-6 Sir John Campbell had treated the whole of the Clyde area together with Argyll and the southern islands of the Hebrides as a strategic unity,¹ and it could be said that by the end of the eighteenth century the area was to all intents and purposes one single economic unit based on the Clyde ports and Glasgow. No longer was the Clyde in any way a barrier, but rather was it a highway carrying the commerce of a prosperous region. Ships, men, women, merchants, seamen, goods, seasonal workers, bills of exchange, money, all moved freely in all directions throughout the area, and people from many districts were involved in cooperative enterprises.

By the end of the eighteenth century, too, this stream of people and commerce was being borne by a relatively efficient and comprehensive communications system. The minister of Lochgoil parish in the 1790s, for instance, could refer to "the easy access to the market.....by water carriage" and could assert that his parishioners were able to send their "black cattle, sheep, wool, fish and every other commodity to Greenock, Glasgow, Dunbarton and other towns with great ease".² Passage for some was secured by one or other of the ferries

1. Sir James Fergusson, Argyll in the Forty-Five, *passim*.

2. O.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 192.

crossing the Clyde and the lochs of the estuary,¹ and in addition many men along the shores of Dumbarton, Cowal, Loch Fyne, Kintyre and the islands had their own boats with which they could transport themselves and their goods to Greenock.² There were also several shipowners in Greenock and other ports with sizeable fleets of vessels making frequent voyages to and from the Highlands, while regular packet services had been inaugurated between Greenock and several Highland ports for the carrying of passengers and goods.³ Some individuals accompanied their produce aboard these packets, and thus it was reported in the Greenock Advertiser of March 27, 1804 that an old woman had taken passage on the Tarbert packet with fifteen dozen eggs for sale in Greenock. Unfortunately some hungry passenger had rifled her goods as they lay on deck and had eaten nine dozen of them!

Increasing intercourse through trade and commerce does not necessarily bring peoples closer together, but despite the differences in language, dress and culture between the Highlanders and the inhabitants of the Lowlands,⁴ it is quite

1. H. McKechnie, The Lamont Clan, pp. 301, 319.

2. Reg. Ho., S.C. Renfrewshire, Criminal Records, Vol. 3, 1788-1816, August 24, 1791; Reg. Ho., Dunoon Presbytery Records, Minutes, Vol. 7, September 17, 1806, CR 2/111/7.

3. O.S.A., Vol. 14, pp. 246-8 (Kilfinan).

4. J. Smith, General View of the Agriculture of the County of Argyle (Edinburgh, 1798), p. 172.

clear that there were no real barriers to their forming personal relationships and to their social intercommunication. In the sixteenth century, various members of the Campbell family had acquired estates in the Lowlands,¹ and relationships between the Highland and Lowland branches of the family remained close. In the same period it was not at all uncommon for Highland chiefs to send their sons as scholars to the Lowlands,² while later in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries ordinary Highlanders followed their example, some young men from Cowal, for instance, attending school at Greenock.³ Increasingly during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, moreover, close ties were being formed between certain Highland and Lowland families. Thus in the early eighteenth century, Sir John Shaw, laird of Greenock, was a close friend and supporter of the Duke of Argyll.⁴ Marriages were also arranged between members of noble and landed Highland and Lowland families,⁵ and these

1. G. Donaldson, Scotland; James V to James VII, pp. 13-14.

2. H. McKechnie, The Lamont Clan, pp. 81-2; S.G.E. Lythe, The Economy of Scotland, 1550-1625, p. 4.

3. Education Returns, Scotland, F.P., 1841, Vol. XIX, Part I, pp. 75, 85, 92, Part II, pp. 34, 35, 44, 52, 53.

4. G. Williamson, Old Greenock (Second Series), p. 93; D. Weir, History of the Town of Greenock, p. 38.

5. McKechnie, op. cit., pp. 81-2; Donaldson, op. cit., pp. 13-14; E.R. Cregeen, 'The Changing Role of the House of Argyll in the Scottish Highlands', in History and Social Anthropology, Ed. I.N. Lewis, p. 155.

alliances helped to bring the various interests together.

Such personal relationships were by no means confined to the upper classes, however, and the Church records tell repeatedly of Highland men or women forming unions of one sort or another with Lowlanders. Some of these unions, it is true, were of an extremely transitory nature, as, for instance, the mesalliance of the Renfrew girl in 1740 who "gave one Alexander McLachlan a highland Gentleman for the father of her child, but knew neither of the place of his residence, nor any further about him than his name".¹ She declared that she had met him in one Buchanan's in the Saltmarket near to Gibson's Wynd, Glasgow, but unfortunately the Presbytery refused to believe her story. In Greenock, too, there were also several illicit unions, and there it does not appear that the language difficulties presented any real obstacle, for although the church authorities were informed in 1745 that one Donald McDonald from North Uist "knows very little of the English language", this did not prevent his having "guilty relations" with a Greenock woman.²

Nevertheless, although such relationships were certainly quite numerous, there were also very large numbers of marriages between Highlanders and Lowlanders in this period.

1. Reg. Ho., Paisley Presbytery Records, Minutes, Vol. 9, September 17, 1740, CH2/294/9.

2. Ibid, April 24, 1745.

The Marriage Registers for the Old or West Parish of Greenock begin in 1698, and in that year the marriage of one, John Wilson, parish of Dunoon, to a girl living in Greenock is recorded.¹ During the next few years men and women from Lochgoilhead, Kilfinan, Kilcalmonell, Rhu and other Highland parishes married inhabitants of Greenock, and throughout the eighteenth century the number of such marriages rose steadily. These unions must have gone far to break down any barriers that might have existed between the two peoples, and this process would be further hastened after the '45 when the Highlanders were forbidden to wear their traditional dress. The historian of Clan Lamont deplored the fact that "at Greenock market there was little to distinguish the Highlanders from the Sassenachs",² and the Highlanders themselves complained that:

"Since changed has our clothing been,
 Each other we'll not recognise
 On market days or gatherings."³

The regulations against the wearing of Highland dress might have been bitterly resented in some parts of the Highlands, but several Highlanders in the areas close to

1. O.P.R., 564/3, Greenock Old or West, Marriage registers.

2. H. McKechnie, The Lamont Clan, p. 312.

3. Ibid.

Greenock quickly became resigned to the change. Some of them indeed became extremely interested in the fashions and costumes popular in the Lowland towns and cities. The minister of Dunoon in the 1790s, for instance, observed regretfully, that "our neighbourhood to Greenock leads our young people to be expensive in their attire, and to imitate such as affect the manners and dress of those who rank higher than themselves".¹ He also added that the young men of the parish "generally have an English cloth coat for Sunday, and a watch in their pocket," and that "the native Highlanders.. in general seem fonder of dress and show than the Southland shepherds that have come among us".²

Another powerful factor helping to break down the distinctions between Highlanders and Lowlanders in the eighteenth century was the national Church. For a number of years after 1690 the authorities had exerted strong pressures to force ministers to enter into and to remain permanently in certain of the highland parishes,³ but throughout the eighteenth century a number of men did move to and fro between Highland and Lowland charges.⁴ Sometimes, moreover, students from Lowland areas preached in

1. O.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 390.

2. Ibid.

3. J. MacInnes, The Evangelical Movement in the Highlands of Scotland 1688 to 1800, p. 17.

4. H. Scott, Pastorale Ecclesiarum Scotticarum, Vol. 3, p. 336 (John MacAulay), Vol. 4, p. 5 (Francis Stewart), Vol. 4, p. 76 (Archibald Robertson), Vol. 4, p. 85 (John MacFarlane).

Highland churches, among them Mr. J. Woodrow, Student of Divinity from Greenock, taken on trials by Dunoon Presbytery.¹ Ministers from Argyll also attended meetings of the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, while at the General Assembly, ministers and elders from the Highlands mingled and cooperated with men from all over the country. The discipline cases already referred to, moreover, often involved a considerable correspondence between the Lowland and Highland parishes or presbyteries involved, and the care taken by the authorities to ferret out the wrongdoers must have persuaded many a Lowland and Highland sinner that they were all part of a great Communion whose vigilance they could not escape even in the remotest part of the Highlands.

The practice of the Church in the eighteenth century of holding Sacraments or Communion which attracted large numbers of people from neighbouring parishes also brought Highlanders and Lowlanders increasingly into contact. Many Highlanders came to Greenock for the celebration of the Sacrament there, and in 1801 the ministers of the Dunoon Presbytery complained that "numbers of their parishioners have been in the practice of resorting to Greenock when the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is dispensed there", and that some "were allowed to communicate without testimonials from their Parish".² These

1. Reg. No., Dunoon Presbytery Records, Minutes, Vol. 5, June 22, 1756. CH 2/111/5.

2. Ibid, Vol. 7, December 1, 1801. CH 2/111/7.

carried abroad with them".¹

By the end of the eighteenth century, therefore, there were strong recreational and ecclesiastical, as well as social, economic, financial and political ties binding the peoples of the Highlands and the inhabitants of Greenock and other Lowland towns closer together. The whole process of integration, moreover, was hastened and quickened by the wars in which Britain was engaged during the second half of the eighteenth century. Highlanders and Lowlanders served together in the army and navy, and men from Argyll and other parts of the Highlands served on Greenock ships and privateers. Thus Mr. Duncan Campbell of Campbeltown stated in evidence before the Committee enquiring into the state of the British Herring Fisheries that "104 seamen went from Campbeltown in the same season on board of two privateers belonging to Port Glasgow and Greenock".² Volunteer Regiments from the Highlands also passed through the town on their way to and from garrison duty in the Lowlands.³ All of these activities increased the contacts between Highlanders and the inhabitants of Greenock, and made a growing number of men from the Highlands familiar with the town.

In the nineteenth century, the bonds between Greenock

1. O.S.A., Vol. 14, p. 244.

2. Reports on British Herring Fisheries, P.P. (First Series), Vol. X, p. 207.

3. G.A., December 11, 1804.

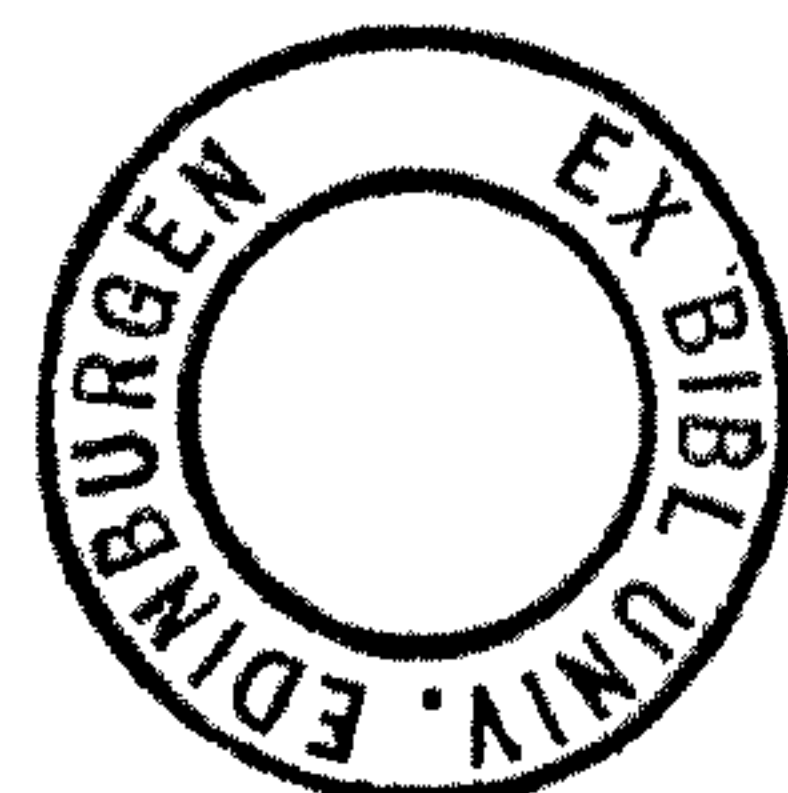
'Holy Fairs' were of course one of the principal entertainments of the period, and thus provided opportunities for Lowlanders and Highlanders to join together in common amusements. Their recreational nature is well attested by an anecdote concerning Kilmacola parish in the 1790s. A group of parishioners approached the minister and asked if there was to be a Sacrament that year. The minister replied that he had not yet decided, but that he was pleased to see them so eager for the ordinance. "Ah," said the spokesman, "it isna that; but if there was to be na Sacrament we wanted to ask if ye wad gie a subscription to get up a horse race to tak some steer about the toon."¹

Other aspects of the social life of the Lowland towns also induced numbers of Highlanders from the neighbouring districts to visit them from time to time. In particular those Highlanders who sailed to Greenock on business and to sell their wares often stayed on in the town for a day or two to sample the pleasures available there. This practice led the minister of Kilfinan in the 1790s to complain that "a number of young persons of too much curiosity" were beginning "to pay frequent visits to Greenock and Port Glasgow, idle away their time, sometimes fall into bad company, and often spend more money before they return than the value of the cargo they

1. J. Murray, Kilmacola - A Parish History, p. 133.

and the Clyde area, on the one hand, and the Highlands, on the other, were still further strengthened, particularly when regular steamboat services were inaugurated shortly after the first voyage of the Comet in 1812. By 1820 there was practically a daily service of steamers in the summer months from Greenock to such places as Inveraray, Tarbert and Lochgilphead, while places near at hand such as Dunoon, Rothesay and Millport were visited by several steamers from Greenock each day.¹ In the following years, further development took place with the introduction of a twice weekly service to Campbeltown, a weekly service to Islay, Staffa, Iona and Skye by way of the Crinan Canal, and a twice weekly service to Stornoway.² Nor were the fares in these early years unduly high, the single passage from Greenock in 1821 to some of the Highland ports being as follows:

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1. W. Hutchison, Greenock Directory (Sixth Edition, c. 1820), pp. 80-1.
 2. Fowler's Commercial Directory of the Lower Ward of Renfrewshire For 1831-32 (Paisley, 1831), pp. 114-17.



	Cabin	Steerage ¹
Millport	5/6d	3/-
Rothesay	3/-	2/-
Lochgilphead	6/6d	4/-
Tarbert	6/6d	4/-
Inveraray	9/-	6/6d
Campbeltown	9/-	6/6d

In the following decades the services were extended to all parts of the West Highlands, including Oban, Inverness, Tobermory and Portree.² Over the years, too, the fares were repeatedly slashed until by 1850 a steerage passage could be secured from such places as Fort William, Oban and Tobermory to Glasgow for as little as 6d.³ Such a relatively efficient, cheap and speedy system of communications brought the West Highlands into extremely close contact with Greenock and the Clyde area. Highland producers and customers could now expect a much better and quicker service from the Greenock markets and suppliers, while people from Argyll and the more northern counties could much more readily pay a visit to the town. As a

1. G.A., January 23, 1821 - Advertisement.

2. The Post-Office Greenock Directory for 1851-52 (Greenock, 1851), Appendix, p. 38.

3. G.A., February 26, 1850 - Advertisement.

writer in the Inverness Courier in 1834 observed, "the most remote island and clachan, placed far amid the melancholy main, has now its share of the comforts of the Saltmarket, the absence of which Baillie Nicol Jarvie deplored so sincerely in his Highland tour".¹

Thus it was that over the centuries from the first settlements at Greenock, the scope and range of contacts between the inhabitants of the town and the peoples of the Highlands steadily increased and widened. In the early days the new community would be known to and visited by only a small number of Highlanders, but over the years it would come to be known by an increasing number of people from an ever-widening area of the Highlands. In earlier times there might have been some significance in the Clyde as a barrier between two societies, but by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a most extensive range of activities was being carried on across this imaginary boundary. Greenock and the Highlands had become integrated into a wider economic and sociological region, and there were no real barriers or obstacles to people moving freely from one place to another, or to Highlanders leaving their homes to settle in Greenock.

1. Quoted in Greenock Advertiser, January 23, 1834.

CHAPTER 2

VOLUME OF HIGHLAND SETTLEMENT IN GREENOCK

The many and varied contacts that existed between the Highlands and Greenock from the very first settlements in the area encouraged and facilitated the permanent settlement of Highland people in the town, and over the centuries large numbers have made their homes there. It is difficult, however, to state categorically when exactly the Highlanders first began settling permanently in Greenock. Malcolm Gray estimated that substantial Highland settlements in the Lowlands first began somewhere about the middle of the eighteenth century,¹ and a local historian, D. Campbell, declared that it was "not till after the rebellions of 1715 and 1745 that Highlanders began to arrive in numbers" in Greenock.² Yet it would appear that settlement began much earlier than these dates, and another local historian, R.M. Smith, has asserted that there were Highlanders among the settlers in the first fishing communities on the site of Greenock.³

There is unfortunately no documentary evidence to

1. M. Gray, The Highland Economy 1750-1850, p. 64.

2. D. Campbell, Historical Sketches of the Town and Harbours of Greenock, Vol. 1, p. 27.

3. R.M. Smith, The History of Greenock, p. 296.

support this claim that Highlanders were among the first settlers in Greenock, but the thesis is certainly convincing and attractive. The town grew out of small fishing settlements,¹ and it is reasonable to suppose that fishermen from across the Clyde and further afield would find a convenient base during the season in the Bay of St. Lawrence. As the temporary settlements gradually took on a more permanent aspect, some of the Highlanders would probably stay for longer periods until they made their residence there. This would indicate that the earliest communities settling in the area were probably of mixed origin, and one might guess that the small settlements stretching along the Bay might be composed of people from different places, and that these gradually coalesced into the communities that became Greenock and Crawfordadyke.

Although it is difficult to substantiate the thesis that Highlanders settled in Greenock at the end of the sixteenth century, there is ample evidence of there being Highlanders in the town during the seventeenth century. One of the most significant sources is perhaps the Minutes of the Synod of Argyll in 1717 which refer to the "considerable numbers of persons having the Irish language, residing in the City of Glasgow and Town of Grinok..".² There are also several

1. R.M. Smith, The History of Greenock, p. 17.

2. Reg. Ho., Synod of Argyll Records, Minutes, Vol. 5, August 8, 1717, CH 2/557/5.

records of individual Highlanders who had settled in Greenock during the seventeenth century. Andrew McIntourner from Craighole near Ardentinny, for instance, served as the laird of Cartsburn's legal agent from 1682-1703,¹ while John Campbell, a near relative of the laird of Daltot in Argyll, lived as a surgeon in the town between 1697 and 1723.² Again, in 1737, a certain John Campbell, sailor in Greenock, was declared heir male to his great grandfather at Evanechan in Cowal.³ The details in the records indicate that his grandfather, born perhaps in the 1650s, had come to Greenock to work as a boatman.

Probably the most convincing evidence of all, however, of the presence of substantial numbers of Highlanders in the population of the town in the seventeenth century is to be found in the Old Parochial Registers of Greenock. The Registers of Marriages for the Old or West Parish beginning in 1698, for example, show that just under 10% of the men and women contracting marriage between 1701 and 1715 had names indicating a Highland origin.⁴ This significant percentage of Highland names in the Marriage Registers, moreover, would suggest that the Highland element in Greenock was of relatively long standing.

1. G. Williamson, Old Cartsburn, p. 139.

2. See Table 10.

3. The Clan Campbell Abstracts of Entries Relating to Campbells in the Sheriff Court Books of Argyll, Ed. Rev. H. Paton (Second Series, Edinburgh, 1915), pp. 202-3.

4. See p. 64 and Table 4.

The balance of evidence would indicate, therefore, that Highlanders were settling in Greenock from the earliest days of the burgh's history. There is of course no final proof that they did in fact form a proportion of the first settlers, but they were certainly present in the burgh in some numbers at an early period in the seventeenth century. This conclusion would clearly necessitate some reappraisal of the dates frequently given for the beginnings of permanent Highland settlement in the Lowlands. The view that significant Highland migration to the south began only after the 1715 and 1745 Rebellions, and that there were barriers and enmities between the two peoples preventing real intercommunication in the seventeenth century, must surely be considerably modified, at least as far as Greenock and the Clyde area is concerned. There might have been antipathy and some hostility, but these must have been minor aspects of a climate of opinion and social relationships that permitted and encouraged contacts between the Highlands and Lowlands and the settlement of Highlanders in Greenock and the Clyde area.

The question of estimating the actual numbers of Highlanders who settled in Greenock at different times since the seventeenth century presents many difficulties. There were some counts of population in the eighteenth century, notably in A. Webster's 'Analysis of the Population of Scotland, 1755'¹ and in The Statistical Account of Scotland,

1. Scottish Population Statistics, Ed. J.G. Kyd.

but neither of these, nor any of the local counts taken in Greenock gave the place of origin of the inhabitants of the town. Even when the government began its census enumerations in 1801, it was not till 1851 that people were asked to state their place of birth. Since it is only in that year and thereafter that we have accurate figures concerning the numbers of Highlanders in Greenock, it was decided to consider the numbers for that year and later years before going on to the more difficult task of estimating the number of Highlanders in the town in earlier years. Table 1 shows the number of people residing in Greenock in selected years from 1851 to 1961 who had been born in the Highland counties of Argyll, Inverness, Ross and Cromarty and Sutherland, together with the percentages of the total population that these Highlanders comprised. Table 2 gives the numbers and percentages of people in Greenock in 1851, 1871 and 1891 who had been born in these four counties and in the Highland areas of Dunbarton, Stirling, Perth, Forfar, Aberdeen, Banff, Moray and Nairn.

Clearly in the middle years of the nineteenth century there were substantial numbers of Highlanders living in Greenock. In 1851 1 in every 9 persons resident in the town had been born in the Highlands, and since there must have been many children born of Highland parents who had earlier settled in the town, then undoubtedly the Highland element in the population was a large one at this period.

The actual numbers of Highlanders in Greenock, moreover, increased after 1851 to a peak of 5178 in 1871, and for many years thereafter there were large numbers of native-born Highlanders living in the town.

Although it is only after 1851 that we can speak with complete certainty of actual numbers and percentages, it is possible to construct reasonably accurate figures for 1841. The census enumerators in that year did not ask for a subject's place of birth, but they did inquire whether or not a person was born in the same county as his place of residence. From this information it was revealed in the Census Report for 1841 that 19,684 (53.3%) of the population of Greenock in that year had been born in Renfrewshire, and 17,252 (46.7%) outside the county. This percentage of 46.7% was broken down into figures for various migrant groups in Greenock by applying ratios obtained from the Registers of Deaths for 1855.¹ Of the 509 persons dying in Greenock in 1855 who had been migrants from places beyond Renfrewshire, for example, 120 had been born in the Highlands (23.6%), and this gave a calculation of $\frac{23.6}{100} \times 46.7\%$ to produce an

1. Registers of Deaths, 1855, Greenock, 564/1-3.

estimated figure of 11.0% for the percentage of Highlanders in the population of the town in 1841. Clearly the figures in the Registers of Deaths might not correspond to the ratios of the migrant groups in the general population, and indeed the figures for 1855 might have been exceptional,¹ but since the people dying in the mid 1850s would generally reflect the situation in an earlier period, there is no reason to suspect that the final percentage obtained is seriously in error.

No figures of comparable accuracy can be constructed for the numbers of Highlanders living in Greenock during the eighteenth century, but fortunately one of the sources does give some general indication of the volume of migration. For a period between about 1730 and 1770 it was customary for the Session Clerks of the Greenock parishes to state the place of residence of the father of a girl contracting a marriage. Thus, for instance, we might find an entry of the following nature: "John McArthur, tailor, and Margaret Livingstone, daughter of Gilbert Livingstone, farmer, Killmichael of Glassrie, both in this parish".² Such entries make it possible to compile tables giving the place of origin of women contracting marriage in Greenock at various periods in the middle years of the eighteenth century. The results are shown in Table 3.

1. It is only for the year 1855 that the place of birth is given in the Registers of Deaths.

2. O.P.R., Marriage Registers, Greenock Mid Parish, 564/1, June 1, 1765.

Once again the figures indicate a considerable volume of Highland settlement in Greenock. Of the girls marrying in the town between 1731-45, some 10% were of Highland origin, and this percentage rose to about 20% in the years 1761-75. It should be stressed, moreover, that these are minimum figures. Where the girl did not state her father's place of residence, or where the Clerk omitted to make inquiries, the entry would appear merely as "in this parish", and it would then become part of the total in the tables as of Greenock origin.

Yet such figures as we have here must be used with great caution. Clearly they refer only to women, and there might well be a substantial difference in the numbers of Highland men and of Highland women living in Greenock at this time. Again, it would be wrong to assume uncritically that the percentage of Highland women contracting marriage would be equal to the percentage of Highland women in the total population. Nevertheless, despite their dangers, these totals and percentages obtained from the Greenock parish registers are certainly of real value as a guide to determining the numbers of young girls living in Greenock at this time who were of Highland origin.

To secure further evidence concerning the numbers of Highlanders living in Greenock in the eighteenth century, it was decided to use the surnames of the town's inhabitants to identify the Highland element there. This procedure,

of course, is open to all sorts of errors and miscalculations, but it seemed that there was sufficient certainty as to the surnames commonly associated with various districts in this early period to warrant such a method. One need not agree with D.F. Macdonald that "in the eighteenth century, even the clan-name of a Highlander indicated fairly accurately the place of his birth",¹ but certainly a person's name might reveal whether he came from the highlands or from the lowlands.

One of the difficulties involved in using surnames to determine a person's place of origin is that certain names like Stewart, Morrison and Livingstone were used by both Highlanders and Lowlanders. It was decided, therefore, to arrange the names in three groups: those names of clear Highland origin; those names of doubtful origin; and those names of definite Lowland or non-Highland origin. The principal authority used for determining the place of origin of the various surnames was Black's The Surnames of Scotland,² but the information obtained there was supplemented by the writer's own research knowledge of the people in the area. Thus, for instance, the name Black was taken to be a highland name, for almost invariably it was found that persons with this name in Greenock were from the Cowal or Inveraray districts of Argyll. Black indeed was the most common

1. D.F. Macdonald, Scotland's Shifting Population, p. 72.

2. G.F. Black, The Surnames of Scotland (New York, 1946).

surnames in the Old Parochial Registers of Kilmaden parish in the period 1757-1855.¹

The whole position was made rather more complicated, however, by the fact that many Highlanders adopted Lowland names or Anglicised versions of their Gaelic names when they settled in the Lowlands. Fortunately certain writers have given lists of the surnames commonly chosen by the Highland migrants, and it was therefore possible to place these names in the Doubtful category. Particularly useful was Blain's History of Bute with an extensive list of such names which were in common use in the Clyde area.² Not surprisingly this changing of surnames caused some confusion at the time, and it became the custom for the naval authorities to request certificates from the local clergy verifying the names and identities of seamen so that their relatives at home could draw allowances. Unfortunately for the men from Bute, "the minister of Rothesay, from a partiality to the Gaelic language, uniformly objects, and declines affording his aid - not choosing to sanction any change in the names devolved upon people from their forefathers".³

After all these various qualifications and problems had been given consideration, the commonest surnames used in

1. J. MacInnes, The Ayles of Bute and Glandaruel (Oban, 1931), p. 25

2. Blain's History of Bute, Ed. Rev. W. Ross (Rothesay, 1888), p. 31.

3. Ibid., p. 32.

Greenock in the eighteenth century were allocated to the three Categories, Highland, Non-Highland, and Doubtful, and lists of these are shown in Appendix 1. These lists were then used to analyse the surnames in the Greenock Marriage Registers in 15 year periods in the eighteenth century, for it was felt that the people recorded there would be representative of all classes, and that the majority of people living in the town would appear there at one time or another. The numbers and percentage figures of the surnames appropriate to the three categories in the various periods are shown in Table 4. In Table 5 are also given the numbers and percentage figures for the two categories, Highland and Non-Highland, the Doubtfuls having been removed.

The results in both tables are a further indication of the substantial Highland element in the population of Greenock in the eighteenth century. 9.3% (11.5% without Doubtfuls) of the population had Highland surnames at the beginning of the century, and this figure rose steadily, reaching 32.5% (41.8%) in the period 1791-1805. It is of course impossible to be quite certain of the validity of these figures, but there are certain sources of evidence for eighteenth century Greenock which allow us to make some check on them. In the first place, the figure of 41.8% for people with Highland surnames marrying in Greenock in the period 1791-1805 can be compared with the statement made by a local minister in the 1750s that 1025 out of 3987 heads of

family (53.9%) were from the Highlands.¹ The difference between the 41.8% and 53.9% might be a result of an inaccuracy in the investigation on which the minister's figures were based, or alternatively it might be that the figures obtained from the name count underestimate the numbers and percentages of Highlanders marrying in Greenock at that period.

Some indication that the latter alternative was the correct one is obtained from an examination of the eighteenth century Customs Cash Accounts Vouchers.² These recorded the vessels and busses receiving the herring bounty at various ports in Scotland, and for a time in the 1780s and 1790s it was customary to list the crew members together with their places of birth. Such material made it possible to test the name count method, and accordingly Table 6 gives the actual places of origin of the crew members of the busses receiving bounty at the port of Greenock during the period April-October, 1790, and also the results of a name count of the same crew members. A comparison of the relevant sets of figures shows that the name count method in this particular instance did indeed underestimate the number of Highlanders serving on the busses. Thus although 89.4% of the crew members were actually born in the Highlands, a figure of only 81.1% was obtained by the name count (with the Doubtfuls

1. O.S.A., Vol. 5, p. 571.

2. Reg. no., Customs Accounts, Cash Accounts Vouchers, E 508.

eliminated in the normal manner). If, on the other hand, all the Doubtfuls were included in the Highland category, then the figure becomes that of 86.6%, much closer to the true position. Nevertheless, the figure of 81.1% is also sufficiently close to the actual position to give some encouragement that the name count method adopted does indeed give approximate figures.

In the results obtained from the Greenock Marriage registers and shown in Table 5, however, there is an additional factor that prevents us from accepting the straight figures from the names counts as being the actual percentage of Highland people living in Greenock at any one time. Thus the method employed fails to distinguish between those persons with Highland names who had recently settled in Greenock and who had been born in the Highlands, and those who had been born in the town of parents settled there for one, two or more generations. To compensate for those individuals who would have Highlands names, but who were born in Greenock, a further calculation was therefore made. From the number of persons with Highland surnames in any one period, the numbers of Highlands men ($\times 2$) in the period 30 years previously were subtracted. This allowed that the original Highland fathers of the earlier period would have had two sons born in Greenock with Highland names. From the resulting figure, a new estimate was calculated, giving the percentage of people from the Highlands and Sute marrying

in Greenock in a particular period. An additional 1-2% was then subtracted to allow for the numbers from Bute having Highland names. The calculations are shown in Table 7, and in Column VI there are given the final estimated percentages of Highland-born persons in the town's population in the various periods in the eighteenth century.

It must be stressed, however, that the figures produced in Column VI of Table 7 cannot be other than mere approximations. The estimates for the percentages of Highlanders appearing in the Marriage Registers, corrected as they are, need not necessarily correspond to the percentages of Highlanders in the general population, for it is possible that the numbers of Highlanders of marriageable age were proportionately greater or smaller than the numbers in other age groups. Nevertheless, if the final figures are taken as estimates and approximations with a possible error of up to perhaps 10% at the maximum in 1776-90, then there is no reason to believe that they are substantially inaccurate. There is every reason to assume, moreover, that the general trends of population change and of the growth of the Highland element in the town depicted in the table reflect fairly accurately the true position.

By combining these estimates of the Highland element in the population of Greenock in the eighteenth century with the numbers and percentages calculated and obtained earlier for 1841 and for the period 1851-1961, it is possible to chart the course and volume of Highland settlement in the town from

further complicated the situation. Nevertheless, it is clear that a considerable volume of migration of Highlanders into Greenock was maintained. The estimated numbers show a decline from c. 5100 in 1801 to 4060 in 1841, but there would be a large number of new settlers to compensate for those Highlanders in the town who died or who moved elsewhere. From about 1830-40, however, there was a further surge of Highland migrants into Greenock, and the numbers of Highlanders in the town's population rose during the years to 1851 and on to a maximum in 1871. After the latter date, the numbers began to fall, and the decline continued right down to 1961.

One interesting feature to emerge from an analysis of the results is that the percentage figures of the Highland element in Greenock followed a slightly different pattern from the actual numbers of migrants. Throughout the eighteenth century, both percentages and numbers rose together, but after about 1800 the percentages began to fall, while the numbers, after a fall till about 1830-40, rose again to a new peak at about 1871. After 1871 the paths of the two sets of figures again coincide, this time in a downward direction. These patterns would indicate that in the eighteenth century the Highland area was one of the principal sources of recruitment for the growing population of Greenock, but that after about 1800 migrants from Ireland and other parts of Scotland came to make up a larger part of the town's population.

the end of the seventeenth century to 1961. The numbers of migrants and the percentages for the whole period are shown in Table 8, and graphs illustrating the main trends are given in Table 9. The dates chosen for the eighteenth century are those for which population estimates are available, and the numbers of Highlanders in the population have been calculated from the percentage figures in Table 7.

The estimates show that at the beginning of the eighteenth century there were perhaps about 80 Highlanders living in Greenock, or about 6.0% of the population of the parish of Greenock. Then as the town grew in size throughout the century, the number of Highlanders in the community increased. The rise was steady during the first half of the century, but after about 1745 it gathered pace. During the American, Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars of the 1770s, 1780s and 1790s, years when Greenock's trade and industry rapidly expanded, the numbers of Highlanders in the population rose sharply until in 1801 there were probably over 5,000 in the town making up some 29.0% of the population.

There are no suitable sources for arriving at reliable estimates of the Highland population in Greenock during the years between 1801 and 1841. With the increasing numbers of second, third and fourth generation Highlanders in the town, the name count method would become increasingly unreliable, while the influx of large numbers of Irish migrants, some of whom had names similar to Highlanders,

CHAPTER 3

COMPOSITION OF THE HIGHLAND MIGRANT GROUPS IN GREENOCK

Hitherto we have considered the total volume of Highland migration into Greenock over the years, but clearly the actual composition of the migrant groups is equally as important as the totals. Not the least significant aspect perhaps is the question of the social class of the Highlanders settling in Greenock. A commonly held view sees the Highland migrants to the Lowlands throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as coming almost entirely from the lower orders of society. J. MacInnes in his The Evangelical Movement in the Highlands of Scotland, 1688 to 1800 stated that "those who settled in the Lowlands were mainly of the cottar class",¹ while D.F. Macdonald in his analysis of Scotland's Shifting Population, 1770-1850 wrote only of the "dispossessed Highlanders"² who sought employment as labourers in the manufacturing towns, and made no reference to any other class of migrant. In the nineteenth century, there are repeated references to the migrants as being of the lower ranks of society. The Greenock Advertiser in 1897, for instance, attributed the rise in the population of Greenock

1. Op. cit., p. 133.

2. Op. cit., p. 73.

between 1821 and 1851 chiefly to the "large additions to the working class from Ireland and the Highlands",¹ while the Provost of Greenock, J.J. Grieve, himself of Highland descent,² referred in 1859 to the "vast numbers of the labouring population compelled to leave the Highland districts in search of employment....in Greenock and other Lowland towns".³

These and many other commentators all repeat the popular image of the Highland migration to the Lowlands, like that of the Irish, as being mainly of the lower ranks in society.

So far as the eighteenth century is concerned, there were indeed very large numbers of Highlanders of the poorer classes moving into Greenock. The ministers of the Argyll parishes writing their reports for The Statistical Account of Scotland referred frequently to the numbers of poor people who had left their districts for Greenock and other manufacturing towns. The report for Lochgoilhead, for example, tells of "the great number of people who have been deprived of their farms...and have settled....in the populous towns upon the Clyde".⁴ A typical representative of these migrants of the lower ranks of Highland society was a certain Duncan Robertson who was born in Glendaruel in 1750. The son of a small cottar (later a

1. G.A., May 1, 1857.

2. See p. 221.

3. G.A., April 23, 1859.

4. O.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 183.

sailor), he moved to Greenock in his teens, and his name appeared in the books of the Weavers' Society there in 1767. He worked in the town as a weaver till about 1820, and then in his later years he became a labourer in a chain factory. He died in 1846 at the age of 96.¹

Nevertheless, even the briefest survey of the local records and source material is sufficient to show that the Highland migrants did not by any means come only from the lower orders, and that people from almost all ranks of Highland society² were to be found among the settlers in Greenock in the eighteenth century. There were, for example, a considerable number of tacksmen and children of tacksmen among the town's population. One member of this class was Colin Lamont, teacher in the Grammar School in Greenock from 1781, and the son of Colin Lamont, tacksman of Inveregain in Cowal.³ Other migrants of the same class were Alexander Campbell, son of Patrick Campbell, tacksman at Kilmorich, Loch Fyne, a landwriter and later Comptroller in the Customs at Greenock,⁴ and Neill Mc Millan, sometime tacksman at Tangullin Mill in Kintyre, and later tidewriter in Greenock.⁵

1. G.A., February 6, 1846.

2. For the structure of Highland society, cf. M.R. Cregeen, 'The Changing Role of the House of Argyll in the Scottish Highlands', in History and Social Anthropology, Ed. I.M. Lewis.

3. H. McKechnie, The Lamont Clan, pp. 433, 439.

4. See Table 13.

5. Reg. No., Commissariat of Glasgow, Register of Testaments, Vol. 73, September 3, 1795.

There were also several members of the Highland professional classes among the migrants to Greenock. Thus in 1729 we find mention in the Synod of Argyll Records of one Alexander Gordon, merchant in Greenock, son of the deceased Alexander Gordon, minister in Inveraray.¹ Other members of this group were "the wife and children" of the deceased Hugh Campbell, minister at Rothesay, who moved to the town in the 1760s,² Mr. J. Woodrow, schoolmaster, from Kilmichael Glassary,³ and a certain John MacAulay, merchant in Greenock in the 1790s, grandson of John MacAulay, minister of Lismore, and cousin of Lord MacAulay the historian.⁴ Highland surgeons, too, settled in the Lowlands, and somewhere before 1789 Archibald Campbell, "late surgeon in Inveraray", moved to Greenock.⁵ A few years earlier in 1778, Catherine McCalmann, daughter of Hugh McCalmann, surgeon in Inverchaolain, was married to Aulay MacAulay, merchant in Greenock.⁶

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1. Reg. Ho., Synod of Argyll Records, Minutes, Vol. 6, August 9, 1728, CH 2/557/6.
 2. Reg. Ho., Presbytery of Paisley Records, Minutes, Vol. 11, May 3, 1775, CH 2/294/11.
 3. Reg. Ho., Presbytery of Dunoon Records, Minutes, Vol. 5, June 22, 1756, CH 2/111/5; Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae, Vol. 4, p. 76.
 4. Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae, Vol. 3, pp. 336-7 (Cardross).
 5. The Clan Campbell Abstracts of Entries Relating to Campbells in the Sheriff Court Books of Argyll, Ed. Rev. H. Paton, (Second Series), p. 211.
 6. O.P.R., Marriage Registers, Greenock Mid Parish, 564/1, August 22, 1778.

Not only were there members of the middle orders of Highland society present in Greenock in the eighteenth century, however, but there were also several representatives of the Highland landed families, particularly from Argyll. One of the earliest recorded was John Campbell, a near relative of the Campbells of Daltot, who practised as a surgeon in Greenock from 1697 to 1723.¹ Other members of this group were Alexander Campbell, 5th son of Archibald Campbell of Inverawe, who became Comptroller of the Customs in Greenock in the 1750s;² John Campbell of the Ashfield family in Knapdale, who became Town Clerk in 1760;³ Duncan Campbell of Glendaruel, who was a merchant in the town in the 1780s and 1790s;¹ and Dugald Malcolm Ruthven, descended from the Malcolms of Poltalloch and from the Ruthvens of Glenman, who engaged in the West Indies trade from Greenock in the 1790s.¹

The higher and titled ranks of Highland society, however, were not so very much in evidence in Greenock in this period. The only evidence discovered of any member of this group having lived permanently in the town in the eighteenth century was contained in a notice inserted in the Greenock Advertiser in 1828:

1. See Table 10; cf. also for other members of this group who had settled in Greenock.

2. See Table 12.

3. See Table 11.

"About the year 1750, John Frazer, Brother to Simon, Lord Lovat, came to Greenock and lodged in the house of Mrs. MacAdam. The said John Frazer died in the year 1754 and his wife soon after. At their death the Family Bible was left in the possession of Mrs. MacAdam, and at her death was left to her son, Mr. John MacAdam, Schoolmaster in Greenock. After his death, his wife went to Ayrshire along with Miss Margaret Frazer, supposed to be a daughter of the said John Frazer, taking the Family Bible with them. Any person who shall communicate such information to the Session Clerk of the Old Parish Church of Greenock regarding the said Margaret Frazer as may enable him to trace out where she died, and lead to the discovery of the said Family Bible shall be handsomely rewarded."¹

Such evidence, however, is rather suspect. There were several claimants to the Lovat titles during the nineteenth century, and it seems clear that this notice was connected with one of these. There was indeed a John Frazer (1674-1716?), brother of Simon, Lord Lovat (executed 1747), who was officially stated to have died unmarried in 1716.² Since he had previously fled abroad after having been outlawed for fire-raising, however, there were not surprisingly rumours and speculations that he had not indeed died at that time. Thus in 1880, a certain Mr. Benjamin Homer Dixon, Consul General

1. G.A., April 29, 1828.

2. J.B. Paul, The Scots Peerage, Vol. V. p. 537.

for the Netherlands in Toronto wrote in the Celtic Magazine that John Frazer had actually survived beyond 1716.¹ He claimed that Simon Frazer had given out that he was dead to prevent any pursuit, and that in the years after 1716 he frequently visited Scotland under assumed names. It was also believed that he had married and had children, and such stories and rumours no doubt gave rise to hopes and ambitions in several families. The notice in the Greenock Advertiser was most probably placed there by some persons who hoped to profit from their connections with the Lovat family.

There is thus no conclusive evidence that any relative of the Lovat family actually lived in Greenock in the eighteenth century. Even if there were some truth in the story, moreover, the presence in the town of an outlawed scion of a noble family living incognito could hardly be considered as proof that members of the Highland aristocracy were ready to move to Greenock at this time. Nevertheless, the fact that several members of the Highland landed families settled in the town clearly demonstrates that the Highland migration to Greenock in the eighteenth century was not merely a movement of the lower orders, but included several of the natural leaders of Highland society.

In the nineteenth century, too, there were Highlanders

1. Celtic Magazine, December, 1880, p. 78.

from a variety of social classes to be found in the population of Greenock. The sources already quoted¹ testify to the presence of large numbers of migrants of the poorer classes, but there were also a considerable number of people from the middle ranks of Highland society settling in Greenock. In 1804, for instance, George Williamson, the son of a Kintyre schoolmaster and ground officer for the Duke of Argyll, arrived in Greenock to begin a career which led to his becoming Procurator Fiscal of the town and of the Lower Ward of the Renfrewshire Sheriff Court.² Other successful migrants were Alexander Thomson, son of a substantial Perthshire farmer, who settled in Greenock in 1800, and later became Manager of the Greenock Bank;³ Colin Campbell, also the son of a Perthshire farmer, who moved to the town as Collector of Inland Revenue and Excise in the 1850s;⁴ and Daniel MacLean, born in Rothesay, who followed a successful legal career in Greenock as Justice of the Peace, Procurator-Fiscal of the Lower Ward of Renfrewshire, and Joint Burgh Fiscal for Greenock in the 1850s and 1860s.⁵ Moreover, the fact that many members of the Greenock middle classes in

1. See pp. 70-1.

2. Extracts from the Autobiography and Diary of George Williamson, 1782-1854, Ed. by his Eldest Son (Greenock, 1891).

3. Greenock Telegraph, February 13, 1867; G. Williamson, Old Greenock (First Series), p. 194.

4. Greenock Telegraph, July 23, 1875. 5. G.A., August 2, 1870.

1851 had been born in the Highlands would suggest that men and women from the more prosperous groups in Highland society were still coming to Greenock in numbers in the nineteenth century.¹

Nevertheless, there was apparent in the nineteenth century a significant difference from the eighteenth century pattern of migration in that there seem to have been few representatives of the Highland landed families moving to the town in this period. A 19th century historian of Glasgow declared that the influx of the landed classes into that city "came to an end before the end of the last century (18th)",² and the influx of these classes from the Highlands into Greenock seems to have ceased about the same time. What is equally suggestive and significant, moreover, is the fact that most of the representatives of the Highland landed families who had settled in Greenock in the eighteenth century left the town somewhere about the end of the century. Tables 10-13 give details of some members of these Highland families who were living in Greenock during the eighteenth century, together with the careers they and their descendants followed, and they provide convincing evidence that many of the representatives of the landed families from the Highlands did indeed quit Greenock in the years about the turn of the century.

1. See p. 162 and Table 43.

2. J.O. Mitchell, Old Glasgow Essays (Glasgow, 1905), p. 67.

The new fields of activity and the particular occupations favoured by the representatives of the Highland landed families after they left Greenock suggest very strongly that they were seeking an environment and way of life which they deemed appropriate to their station and class. Such a life they could pursue on a Plantation in the West Indies, as an officer in the army, in a position with the East India Company or in the colonial service, as a laird of a Highland or a Lowland estate purchased with money amassed in trade, or as a prosperous merchant in Glasgow, Liverpool, London or the colonies. Such a life they seemingly could support in the Greenock of the eighteenth century, but not in the Greenock that was being shaped in the early nineteenth century.

In the eighteenth century, Greenock was in the main a trading and commercial centre. It was largely a community of sailors, shopkeepers and merchants where the representatives of the Highland landed families could find an acceptable niche, and where their family backgrounds would secure for them social prestige and a recognised status.¹ But as Greenock grew larger and as industry developed, there was a striking change in the whole social climate. The rather more leisured life of trade and commerce was partly replaced by the more competitive and harsh reality of industry. In Greenock this change took place very largely during the revolutionary and

1. The fact that these personages were given their Highland titles and designations in the Greenock records in the eighteenth century proved invaluable in identifying them.

Napoleonic Wars, and it was not perhaps by accident that this was the period that witnessed the departure of so many representatives of the Highland landed families.

An illustration of the eighteenth century atmosphere and society in Greenock and of the change that we have been describing is perhaps to be seen in the lives and careers of John Campbell of Ashfield and his descendants. (See Table 11). In 1760 he was invited by the Greenock Town Council to take up the position of Town Clerk, a position he held till his death in 1797. He played a prominent part in local affairs and politics, and served for many years as a Councillor. He was not over-careful in his keeping of the town's accounts, however, and he owed the Funds a considerable sum of money. Nevertheless, he was still influential enough to have his son, William, enjoined with him in the Clerkship in 1790.

In 1797, William Campbell took over the Clerkship on his father's death, but he soon ran into difficulties. In 1804 the Council complained of his conduct and of his "notorious incapacity", and in 1807 he was dismissed. He claimed his appointment had been for life, but the Town Council records (found in his coal cellar with 43 pages missing) did not support his assertion. He later ventured into the grain business, but his efforts there ended in bankruptcy. It seemed, therefore, that the possession of a family name and influence was no longer sufficient to guarantee success in the new Greenock, and not surprisingly the other sons of John Campbell

of Ashfield took themselves off. The second son, John, established a successful business in Calcutta, while another, Robert, became one of the first merchants in New South Wales. The son of William Campbell also left Greenock and joined his uncle in Sydney. His son in turn moved back to England to become the High Sheriff of Berkshire, a position much more in keeping with his family traditions than grubbing around the depressing industrial quarters of Greenock.

A slightly different pattern of movement was revealed by the family of Alexander Campbell, 5th son of Archibald Campbell of Inverawe, and Surveyor-General in the Customs at Greenock in the 1750s (see Table 12), but again the tendency for the members of the Highland landed families to quit Greenock in the years around 1800 is evident. Alexander Campbell's eldest son, Archibald, made a very considerable fortune as a merchant in the West Indies trade, and on his death in 1825 he left estate valued at £122,238. His interests had extended beyond Greenock, however, and he had developed several concerns in London. He also purchased estates in Ayrshire and at Langbank in Renfrewshire, and his descendants purchased the Highland estate of Auchendarroch. His brother, too, had moved as a merchant to London, and though his sister remained in Greenock and married Duncan Campbell of Auchlian,¹ a prominent merchant and baillie in Greenock, her two sons left the town to take up posts in the East India Company.

1. See Table 10.

Another family whose history reveals the changing attitudes of the Highland landed classes towards Greenock and settlement there is the Campbells of Ballochyle near Kilmac. In the late eighteenth century, Colonel Alexander Campbell of Ballochyle had business and property connections with Greenock, and when he died in 1819, his will showed that he had appointed two Greenock merchants as trustees of his estate, and one of them to assist his wife in the guardianship of his children. Two of his sisters settled in Greenock, and one of them married John Colquhoun, Esq., Physician in Greenock. The two ladies continued to live in the town until their deaths in 1836 and 1840 respectively, and both were buried in the Duncan Street Burial Ground there. Colonel Campbell's heir, William Rose Campbell, born in 1819, and educated at Joretto, seems to have lived in Greenock for some time during his younger years, and in the mid-1830s he was conducting some of his estate business from there. But in 1839, at the age of twenty, he left Greenock to take up a business appointment in Liverpool. Soon after his arrival, he received a letter from a 'cousin', Alexander McKay, who was still resident in Greenock. This letter so admirably expresses the attitudes which the landed classes had by this time developed towards Greenock that it is worth quoting in some detail:

"....I think you will be much better in Liverpool where you will soon be a merchant yourself, and I hope it will soon

be Campbell and Co. at the head of a flourishing business...

"I should like very much to get out to the East Indies and get mate on one of the country ships, as an English navigator with instruments is thought a good deal of there, and I know that is just the spot where I should do well and make money.... When once I get out on a good footing, I won't come back to Greenock in a hurry..."

William Rose Campbell, however, did not remain long enough in Liverpool to establish a "flourishing business", for he joined the East India Company and rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the Military Service.¹ The later career of his 'cousin', Alexander McKay, was not revealed, but one can be reasonably certain that he would find employment furth of Greenock and of Scotland. His use of the word 'English' in a reference by implication to himself would suggest that he had gone considerably further in shedding his Scottishness than those gentlemen who, at this time, liked to call themselves North Britons.

The example of the members of the landed families in leaving Greenock for wider fields of opportunity was soon

1. Reg. Ho., Monuments of William Rose Campbell of Ballochyle, GD/236; Reg. Ho., Minutes of the Particular Register of Sasines, Renfrewshire, Vol. 15, November 8, 1791, RS 81/15; Tombstones in Duncan Street Burial Ground, Greenock; Burke's Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Landed Gentry, Ed. N.G. Pine (Seventeenth Edition, London, 1952), p. 513.

followed by people from other ranks of society, particularly those who had been successful in Greenock. The sons of Alexander Campbell, Comptroller of the Customs at Greenock, and himself the son of Patrick Campbell, tacksman at Kilmorich, Loch Fyne, for instance, soon left the town for ventures elsewhere. Two of his sons, Colin and John, entered the service of the East India Company, while a third, Mungo Mutter Campbell, became a prominent Glasgow merchant trading to the West Indies, and from 1824-5 served as Lord Provost of the city. (See Table 13).

The process whereby men who were successful in Greenock moved on to other areas of greater opportunity continued throughout the nineteenth century, and is well illustrated in the experiences of the MacFie Family. (See Table 14). Robert MacFie came to Greenock in 1768 from Rothsay, and after a few years as a shopkeeper he became prominent in the sugar refining industry. His eldest son, William, continued as a sugar refiner in Greenock, being Provost there in the years 1835-7, but the family soon extended its interests beyond the town. The younger son, John, opened a refinery in Leith, and his son, Robert Andrew, later became M.P. for Leith Burghs. Over the years, too, the family had developed interests and refineries in Liverpool, and by the 1850s the refineries in Greenock and Leith were closed and the business concentrated in Liverpool. The family remained there as one of the dominant groups in the sugar refining industry in the United Kingdom

until 1938 when the firm was acquired by Tate and Lyle.

As their businesses in Greenock prospered, the MacFies also began to purchase landed estates. The original Robert bought Langhouse, near Inverkip in Renfrewshire, in the 1790s, while his grandson, Robert, the son of William MacFie, and himself a refiner in Greenock, purchased Airds, near Appin, in 1852. Two of the latter's brothers-in-law, Dr. William Large Lawrie, and Duncan Alexander Campbell, also quit their interests in Greenock about this time and moved to the estates of Drumnel and Ardtur in Appin respectively. Dr. Lawrie was a native of Dumfries,¹ but Duncan Alexander Campbell was almost certainly the descendant of Highlanders.² He himself had been born in Glasgow about 1804 to Alexander Campbell, Farmer, and Jean Campbell (ne Campbell), but in Greenock he was constantly associated with Highland activities. In 1856, when a group of "Highlanders and Descendants of Highlanders in Greenock" made a presentation to Sir Colin Campbell of the Crimea, Duncan Alexander Campbell acted as their spokesman. He played a very prominent part in local affairs in Greenock as

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1. 1851 Census Enumeration Books, Greenock, 444/19, p. 14;
1861 Census Enumeration Books Appin, 525/2/2, p. 2;
Greenock T.C.R., July 3, 1855.
 2. The Post-Office Greenock Directory for 1851-52, p. 24;
Greenock T.C.R., July 3, 1855, November 4, 11, 1846;
G.A., January 31, 1850, July 4, 1856, October 24, 1861;
1851 Census Enumeration Books, Greenock, 443/117, p. 19;
Reg. Ho., Registers of Seising, Argyll (Printed Abridgements),
Vol. 2 (113), May 5, 1856; Registers of Deaths, 1861,
Appin, 525/2, p. 4, No. 10.

a merchant, distiller, director of the Chamber of Commerce, councillor and Treasurer of the burgh before moving to his estate at Appin.

Several other men of Highland origin in Greenock purchased estates in the Highlands, but for those who wished to retain a connection with their business or professional interests in the town, a situation such as Appin was rather distant. Individuals such as Alexander Thomson of the Greenock Bank,¹ and George Williamson, jun., writer,² therefore, purchased estates in the parishes of Kilfinan and Kilmun respectively. Their residences there would of course be used during their leisure time and as holiday homes.

Men of the less prosperous classes in Greenock, too, were more than ready to leave the town whenever a favourable opportunity presented itself. In the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century, many probably took advantage of the frequent advertisements appearing in the Glasgow and Greenock newspapers asking for men to go to the West Indies as tradesmen and indentured workers.³ Many people from the

1. See p. 77; Reg. Ho., Registers of Seisins, Argyll (Printed Abridgements), Vol. 1/2 (375), December 20, 1842.
2. See pp. 77, 246; Reg. Ho., Registers of Seisins, Argyll (Printed Abridgements), Vol. 1/2 (670), November 26, 1844.
3. Glasgow Courant, February 8, 1748; G.A., September 22, 1809, July 16, 1810, November 23, 1810.

area also emigrated to the colonies and the United States throughout the later eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,¹ while large numbers moved to other places in Scotland and England. In 1871, for example, 20% of those who had been born in Greenock and who were still residing in Scotland had moved to homes outside the town.² Almost certainly, too, there were many of the descendants of Highland migrants among those Greenock-born persons who had left the town for other places in Scotland and abroad.

1. G.A., October 11, 1832, October 24, 1833.

2. Calculations by the present researcher from the Census Report, 1871.

CHAPTER 4

REGIONAL ANALYSIS: AREAS SENDING MIGRANTS TO GREENOCK

Another important consideration in any analysis of the movement of Highlanders to Greenock is the question of which particular areas of the Highlands were principally involved. One obvious and convenient division for comparative study is the county, and in Table 15 are shown the numbers of migrants in Greenock in 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881 and 1891 from each of the Highland counties of Argyll, Inverness, Ross and Cromarty and Sutherland, together with those from the county of Bute. Also given are the population totals of these various counties, and the figures obtained by dividing the populations of the counties at the respective dates by the number of migrants from each of them living in Greenock. These ratios or proportions give convenient measures for assessing the relative volumes of migration from areas of differing populations. For the years 1851, 1871, and 1891 the numbers of migrants in Greenock from the Highland districts of Dunbarton, Stirling, Perth, and Forfar, Aberdeen, Banff, Moray and Nairn are also shown.¹

The whole pattern of migration illustrated in Table 15 seems to conform exactly to the law of migration postulated

1. See Map 3.

by scholars that the "migrants enumerated in a certain centre of absorption will.....grow less with the distance from..... the native population which furnishes them".¹ There was a far larger number of migrants from Argyll than from any of the more northern counties, and the proportion or ratio figures confirm that the migration flow from the areas closer to Greenock such as Dunbarton, Bute and Argyll was very much heavier than that from the more distant regions. The migration figures for the Argyll Presbyteries for the year 1851 shown in Table 16, moreover, display a similar pattern and trend. The Presbyteries there are listed in order of their proximity to Greenock,² and once again one can discern a strong tendency for the areas closer to Greenock to have a heavier migratory flow into the town. There is an almost arithmetical progression in the ratio figures as we move further away from Greenock, with Cowal having 1 in 11, Islay 1 in 30 and Mull 1 in 66. The county of Bute fits rather neatly into this progression with 1 in 34, as does the Highland area of Dunbarton with 1 in 30. It will be observed, moreover, that the Presbyteries of Lorn and Mull, the most northerly areas of Argyll, lead on in the progression to Inverness with 1 in 235 and Ross and Cromarty with 1 in 899 (Table 15).

1. W. Isard, *Methods of Regional Analysis* (New York, 1960), p. 68; E.G. Ravenstein, 'The Laws of Migration', in Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, Vols. 48, 52 (1885, 1889).

2. See Map 4.

Nevertheless, this seemingly neat pattern begins to break down in the years 1871 and 1891, and it is then no longer true that the areas closer to Greenock always provided the greater number of migrants, either on the basis of raw numbers or of the ratio. In these years the Presbyteries of Inveraray and Islay had a greater migration flow than the Presbytery of Cowal, the district closest to Greenock, while in 1891 the Presbytery of Mull had a heavier rate of migration than Kintyre. In both of these years, the area with the heaviest migration flow was the Presbytery of Islay, an area further away from Greenock than is Cowal, Inveraray and Kintyre.

An even more complex migratory pattern is revealed when the still smaller areas of the parishes are studied and analysed.¹ Table 17 shows the migration figures and ratios in 1851, 1871 and 1891 for all the parishes in the Presbyteries of Cowal, Inveraray and Kintyre, together with some of the more distant parishes, and it at once becomes apparent that distance from the town was by no means the only factor determining the number of migrants moving to Greenock. In 1851, for instance, nine of the parishes listed had a higher rate of migration than Dunoon, the parish nearest to Greenock, while in 1871, there were sixteen with a heavier flow than Dunoon. Moreover, the parish which

1. See Chap 5.

sent the largest proportion of its inhabitants as migrants to Greenock. In most of these years was Kilmodan, a parish at a somewhat greater distance from the town than other Cowal parishes such as Dunoon and Inverchapelain. Other parishes which also seem to have had a significantly high migration rate are Knappdale, Craighish and Kilmichael Glassary in Inverclyde Presbytery, Saddell and Skipness in Kintyre, and Jura in Islay Presbytery. Jura is an extremely interesting example, for though much further away from Greenock than the Cowal parishes, it closely rivalled Kilmodan, and indeed in 1891 it had the highest rate of migration to Greenock of all the Argyll parishes.

A particularly interesting feature of the Argyll migration patterns in the years 1851, 1871 and 1891 is to be seen in the figures for the small burghs of Tarbert, Ardristraigh and Lochgilphead shown in Table 18. These towns, particularly Tarbert and Lochgilphead, had very high rates of migration to Greenock that were the equal of almost all, and greater than most other areas. It is to be noted, too, that the parishes in which they are situated, namely Kilmacashell and Kilmoray, Saddell and Skipness, Knappdale, and Kilmichael Glassary had also high migration rates. It would seem, therefore, that these towns were pulling in migrants from the surrounding countryside and then channeling them on to places like Greenock. This is an interesting and important consideration in view of the

commonly held belief that one of the factors causing Highland depopulation has been the lack of towns to act as plugs and stoppers to the people coming in from the countryside. In the places we have been studying, on the contrary, it would appear that these small towns acted rather as relay stations and funnels through which people could make their way to the larger lowland towns. Nor do the figures for the burghs of Campbeltown and Inveraray suggest that the burghs they contained lowered in any way their rates of migration to Greenock. Larger towns might possibly have helped to slow down depopulation, but certainly small burghs like Tarbert and Longfildhead with populations in the region of 1,000 to 2,000 did not have any significant effect.

Another interesting aspect of the patterns of migration from the Highlands into Greenock in this period is the high migration rates obtaining for the islands of the Hebrides (Table 19). The migratory flow from the southern islands of Jura, Islay and Colonsay was exceptionally heavy, but most of the other islands, too, sent proportionately more migrants to Greenock than did the neighbouring areas of the mainland. Thus, for instance, Skye had a migration ratio of 1 in 107 in 1851, as compared with a ratio of 1 in 235 for Inverness, while Lewis in 1871 had a ratio of 1 in 152, as compared with a ratio 1 in 295 for Ross and Cromarty. The results also show a clear tendency for the islands closer to Greenock like Islay and Jura to have a higher migration

rate than the more distant islands, but there were some deviations from a neat pattern or progression from south to north. Lismore, for example, had a much higher rate than Mull or Tiree, and in 1871 and 1891 its rate was higher than most of the southern parishes close to Greenock. Skye, too, had achieved a relatively high rate by 1871, and by 1891 it was sending proportionately more migrants to Greenock than, for example, Coll or Tiree.

It is a much more difficult task to determine the rate of migration into Greenock from various areas of the Highlands in the eighteenth century, for the method used earlier of identifying Highlanders in Greenock by their surnames would certainly not be sensitive and accurate enough to link them with particular districts of the Highlands. We are left, therefore, with the evidence from the Customs accounts concerning the buss crews sailing from Greenock and the areas from which they were drawn,¹ and that from the Greenock Marriage Registers which gave the residence of the fathers of girls being married in the town.² The results from these sources are shown in Tables 20 and 21 respectively. So far as the figures from the Marriage Registers are concerned, only the totals of female migrants are given, for the numbers involved did not seem to justify the compilation of proportion or ratio figures.

1. See Table 4 and pp. 65-6.

2. See Table 3 and p. 60.

The evidence concerning the buss crews, of course, does not tell us anything directly about the numbers of Highlanders living in Greenock, but certainly the figures reveal most interesting aspects of the areas of recruitment. There are indeed some variations from the patterns of migration to Greenock shown in the period 1851-91 (Tables 15-19). but the similarities are most striking. Thus though the Presbytery of Islay and the island of Jura might be under-represented, and the island of Mull over-represented, as compared with the pattern of migration to Greenock in the nineteenth century, the figures for the counties and the Argyll Presbyteries generally reflect the nineteenth century figures and patterns. The numbers from the various parishes, too, reveal most interesting features, with such districts as Kilfinan, Kilmoran, Knapdale and Kilmichael Glassary, which came to send a proportionately high number of migrants to Greenock in the nineteenth century, providing very large numbers of men for the buss crews. All this would indicate that the employment provided by the herring fishings was an important factor leading Highlanders to settle in Greenock, and that those areas from which large numbers of men left to work in the fishings established such close contacts with Greenock that a high rate of migration to the town was maintained over a considerable period.

The results obtained from the Greenock Marriage Registers (Table 21) also indicate that the pattern of movement from the

Highlands to Greenock in the eighteenth century was in general rather similar to that in the nineteenth century. There was perhaps an even stronger tendency for migration to be from the areas close to Greenock, with the counties of Argyll and Bute and the Highland districts of Dunbarton sending many more women to Greenock than Inverness and the other northern counties; with the Presbyteries of Cowal and Inveraray sending the bulk of the migrants from Argyll, and with the parish of Dunoon, the parish closest to Greenock, sending more women to the town than any of the other Argyll parishes. It is quite clear, however, that such parishes as Kilmodan and Kilmichael Glassary, parishes which supplied many men for the buss crews and which were to have a high migration rate to Greenock in the nineteenth century, were already sending a significant number of migrants to the town. The experience of these parishes contrasted markedly with that of Lochgoilhead, a parish which, while sending fairly large numbers of migrants to Greenock in the eighteenth century, had a relatively low rate of migration to the town in the nineteenth century. The migratory pattern of Lochgoilhead, moreover, seems to have been rather similar to that of the Dunbarton parishes of Rhu and Rosneath, which were responsible for sending a large percentage of the Highland migrants to Greenock in the eighteenth century, but which played a less important part in the movement in the nineteenth century.

It must be admitted, however, that the results obtained from the Greenock Marriage Registers and shown in Table 21 might be subject to a certain degree of error in that any Highland Catholics or Episcopaliana living in Greenock in the late eighteenth century might not have had their marriages recorded in the Church of Scotland registers. Nevertheless, there is some reason to believe that there could have been only a very small number of Highlanders belonging to these faiths in Greenock at this time. The Rev. Alexander Webster in 1755, for instance, listed the whole population of Greenock as being Protestant, and made no mention of there being any Catholics.¹ Moreover, there was no Catholic congregation in the town until 1802, and even then it numbered only about 100.² It is true that a Roman Catholic Bishop speaking in Greenock in 1816 did refer to the "many Highland and Irish Catholics" there,³ but since the first Roman Catholic Church built in the town in 1816 had only 761 sittings (as compared with 1498 in St Michael Street Relief Church, 1106 in the Nicholson Street United Secession Church, and 600 in the Independent Church),⁴ there could not have been a very large number of Catholics in the town's population at that time. By 1836 the Catholic

1. J.G. Kyd, Scottish Population Statistics, p. 31.

2. R.M. Smith, The History of Greenock, p. 269.

3. G.A., August 20, 1816.

4. N.S.A., Vol. VII, pp. 462-3.

congregation in Greenock numbered in the region of 4,000, but the vast majority of these were Irish and only about 50 were Highlanders.¹ The Registers of Marriages for Greenock in 1855 also indicate that there were only relatively small numbers of Catholic Highlanders in the town, for of the 135 Highlanders being married in Greenock in that year, only 7 had their marriage ceremony carried out according to the rites of the Catholic Church.² In the same way there do not appear to have been a significant number of Highland Episcopalians living in Greenock in the eighteenth century. The first Episcopal Church in the town was built only in 1824, and the congregation was then a rather small one.³ Moreover, the Registers of Marriages for 1855 do not reveal the presence of any numerous Highland Episcopalian element in the town at a later date, for none of those being married according to the rites of the Episcopal Church had been born in the Highlands.² Thus it is most probable that the general trends shown in Table 21 were reasonably close to the actual pattern of migration of women into Greenock from the Highlands in the eighteenth century.

1. Report on the State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain, 1836, P.P., 1836, Vol. XXXIV, p. 613 - Report by William Gordon, Resident Priest of Greenock and Fort Glasgow.

2. Calculations made by the present researcher from the Registers of Marriages, 1855, Greenock, 564/1-5.

3. R.M. Smith, The History of Greenock, pp. 263-9.

The figures used hitherto in our analysis of the volume and pattern of Highland migration into Greenock in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have made no real distinction between men and women, but clearly the relative parts played by the two sexes in the movement is a very important issue. Newte in 1791 observed that there were more females than males in the Highlands and that "few of the former, but many of the latter leave the country",¹ but an analysis of the numbers of men and women from the Highlands settling in Greenock during the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries would provide little support for this statement. Table 22 shows the numbers of men and women respectively living in Greenock at selected dates from 1700 to 1961 who had been born in the Highlands. The later figures are obtained from the Census Reports and Census Enumeration Books, but the earlier totals in the eighteenth century are estimates based on the numbers of men and women respectively with Highland names appearing in the Greenock Marriage Registers at various periods (See Table 22A). It will be observed that the numbers of migrants of the two sexes do not appear to have differed markedly at any time. In the early years there would seem to have been a slightly larger number of Highland men than women in the town's

1. T. Newte, Prospects and Observations on a Tour in England and Scotland, p. 235.

population, but after about 1750 there were always more women migrants than men. Seemingly, therefore, in the later period, the movement of Highlanders to Greenock conformed to the law of migration put forward by Ravenstein that "females are more migratory than males".¹

Some modification of this conclusion, however, becomes necessary when one studies the relative volume of male and of female migration from the various areas of the Highlands into Greenock. It is impossible to differentiate between men and women for particular areas in the eighteenth century, since the the only available source, the Greenock Marriage Registers, indicated only the numbers of women involved, but for the years after 1851 several very significant features appear (see Tables 23-25). Consistently in the years 1851, 1871 and 1891, for instance, there were higher numbers of women in the population of Greenock from the county of Argyll than there were men, but from the northern counties of Inverness and Sutherland the reverse was true with there being a significant difference in favour of the men. Ross and Cromarty also conformed to this pattern, for although there were more women than men from that area in Greenock in 1891, there were probably exceptional circumstances pertaining in that year, and by 1901 the men from that county were again in the majority in Greenock.

1. W. Isard, Methods of Regional Analysis, p. 68; E.G. Ravenstein, 'The Laws of Migration', in Journal of the Statistical Society, Vols. 48, 52 (1885, 1889).

The distinction between the areas closer to Greenock and the more distant regions is also seen in the figures for the Argyll Presbyteries for 1851, with the Presbyteries of Cowal, Inveraray and Kintyre sending more women migrants to Greenock than men, but with the Presbyteries of Islay, Lorn and Mull having greater numbers of men migrating to the town than women. The figures for the various Argyll parishes tend, moreover, to follow the same general pattern as for their respective Presbyteries, and do not reveal any significant variations from the trends shown in the larger areas.

The situation in the various areas and districts of the Highlands, however, was not a static one, and there was a clear tendency, as the years passed, for the numbers of women from the more distant regions to increase relatively to the numbers of men. Thus in 1871 the numbers of women from the Presbyteries of Islay, Lorn and Mull came to outnumber the male migrants, and this excess continued in 1891. Similarly, the relative numbers of women moving to Greenock from the more northern counties steadily increased, and by 1931 there were in the population of Greenock more women than men from each of the counties of Inverness, Ross and Cromarty and Sutherland.¹

1. Census Report, 1931.

The migration of peoples from the various areas of the Highlands to Greenock during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries came, therefore, to assume a distinct and developing pattern. In the eighteenth century, the areas close to Greenock, namely the coastal districts of Cowal and Dunbarton, provided most of the migrants coming to the town from the Highlands. Even at this time, however, there were districts such as Kilmodan and Kilmichael Glassary which were more distant, but which nevertheless sent considerable numbers of migrants to Greenock. Later in the nineteenth century, the areas close to Greenock gradually lost their dominance, and by 1851 places such as Knapdale, Jura, Islay and Lismore had a higher migration rate to the town than several of the Cowal and Dunbarton parishes. Then in the second half of the nineteenth century, even more distant places such as Skye and Lewis began to send an ever increasing number of migrants until in 1891 Skye had a higher migration rate than many areas nearer to Greenock. It would appear, therefore, that the influence and pull of Greenock on the Highland area have reached out in a phase or wave like motion, first affecting districts close at hand and then more distant places within an ever-widening radius in successive periods throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Seemingly, moreover, when a particular area first began

sending migrants to Greenock, the initial contacts were made, and the first migrations undertaken, predominantly by men. Thus in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, when most of the migrants came from Cowal and Dunbarton, there was most probably a majority of men among the Highlanders moving to Greenock from these areas. After a short time, however, the numbers of women from these districts came to equal and surpass the male migrants, and thereafter they always remained in a majority among the migrants. The same process was then repeated in other districts as more distant regions were affected by the pull and influence of Greenock.

N.B. It will be observed that throughout this chapter only the actual settling of Highland migrants who had been born in different parts of the Highlands in Greenock has been examined and described, and that no consideration has been given to any temporary halts or settlements they might have made at other places en route. A. Redford observed that a typical pattern of migration in many parts of England and in Scotland was that of short-distance movements towards the industrial centres,¹ and there is indeed some evidence to suggest that numbers of the Highland migrants did not come

1. A. Redford, Labour Migration in England, 1800-50 (Manchester, 1926), pp. 55-7.

directly to Greenock. The figures of migration from the parishes of Knapdale, Kilcalmonell and Kilmichael Glassary to Greenock, for example, would suggest that numbers of migrants moved into the towns of Tarbert and Lochgilphead and then on to Greenock.¹ Similarly many Highlanders who moved to Campbeltown or Rothesay in the late eighteenth century to take part in the herring fishings would probably transfer later to Greenock. The fact, too, that over 10% of the population of Kilmaccolm parish in Renfrewshire in 1851 were Highland-born² would perhaps indicate that people from the Highlands were moving into that district to take the place of local people who had migrated to Greenock or other towns in the area; and it is reasonable to suppose that some of the Highlanders there would move on later to Greenock. The 1851 and 1891 Census Enumeration Books for Greenock, moreover, also listed several Highland families where the birth-places of the children suggested that perhaps the family had not moved directly to Greenock. In 1851, for instance, John McCorquodale, a Time Keeper in the Foundry, and his wife Ann, both from Lorn, were recorded as

1. For the movement of people from Argyll into the towns of Tarbert and Lochgilphead, see 'Changing Form and Function of Settlement in South West Argyll, 1841-1961' by Isobel M.L. Robertson, in The Scottish Geographical Magazine, Vol. 83 (1967), pp. 29-45.

2. Calculations made by the present researcher from the 1851 Census Enumeration Books, Kilmaccolm, 446.

having a daughter who had been born in Lochgilphead.¹ It would be extremely difficult to obtain statistical evidence as to the extent of this practice, however, and any final assessment would be dependent on a detailed study of the areas in the neighbourhood and hinterland of Greenock, and of the various districts in Argyll and other parts of the Highlands. For the purposes of this investigation, therefore, the actual numbers who had arrived and settled in Greenock by particular dates have been taken to be the significant and vital factors, whether they moved to the town directly or halted temporarily at other places en route.

1. 1851 Census Enumeration Books, Greenock, 442/101, p. 8.

SECTION II

THE EXPERIENCES OF THE HIGHLAND MIGRANTS IN GREENOCK

CHAPTER 5OCCUPATION CHOICE

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

As the Highland migrants left their homes and settled in Greenock, they were faced with all sorts of problems of adjustment and living in their new community. Not the least important of these adjustments was the question of securing satisfactory employment in the town. For many of the migrants, their initial decision to move to the Lowlands had most probably been closely connected with this very problem of finding alternative or better employment opportunities.

In the same way that many observers have assumed that the main streams of Highland migrants to the Lowlands in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were from the lower ranks of society, so, too, most commentators have declared that the occupations taken up by the Highland settlers in Lowland towns and cities were of a menial or labouring nature. T. Newte, writing in 1791, for instance, declared that "as the offices of drudgery, and of labour, that require not any skill, are generally performed in London by Irishmen, and Welsh people of both sexes; so all such inferior

departments are filled in Edinburgh by the Highlanders".¹ He added that "there is a constant influx of stout healthy men from the mountainous country into Edinburgh, as well as into other cities of note in Scotland, to supply the places of porters, barrow-men, chairmen and such like", and observed that "it is also Highlanders, chiefly, that comprise the City-Guard of Edinburgh".² A writer in The Scots Magazine in 1766 expressed a similar view and observed that the Highlanders in Edinburgh "are usually employed in hard labour and menial service", and that there were hundreds of them working as "chairmen, porters, watermen, day-labourers... and household servants".³

Similar comments were also made about the Highlanders in Greenock. The writer of the report for Greenock in The Statistical Account of Scotland, for example, declared confidently "that most of the labourers, boatmen, sailors etc. in Greenock are from the Highlands".⁴ Later in the nineteenth century, too, several local citizens spoke and wrote in the same vein. In 1857, a council official, Robert Blair, wrote of the "large additions to the working class from Ireland and

1. T. Newte, Prospects and Observations on a Tour in England and Scotland, p. 362.

2. Ibid.

3. The Scots Magazine, Vol. 28 (July 1766), p. 341.

4. O.S.A., Vol. 5, p. 572.

the Highlands",¹ while in 1859 Provost J.J. Grieve declared that very few of the Highlanders who had settled in Greenock "in recent years.....were skilled workmen".² It is not surprising, therefore, that modern historians have concluded that many of the Highlanders "gravitated into....unskilled trades",³ or that "with the Irish, (they) formed the lowest strata of labour in the growing industrial centres of Glasgow, Greenock and Paisley".⁴

As far as the second half of the eighteenth century is concerned, there seems little reason to question the literary evidence or to doubt that many Highlanders settling in Greenock did in fact find employment as porters, barrowmen, labourers, workmen and sailors. Indeed the views put forward by so many commentators is amply confirmed by the statistical evidence illustrated in Tables 26 and 27. In these are shown the percentages of those men with Highland, Non-Highland and Doubtful surnames who appear in the Greenock Marriage Registers in the periods 1761-75 and 1776-90 as being employed in various occupations and trades. The norm figures are those of the percentage Highland, Non-Highland and Doubtful male surnames appearing in the Greenock Marriage Registers for these periods.

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1. R. Blair, The Dwellings of the Working Classes in Greenock, p. 2.
 2. G.A., April 23, 1859.
 3. T.C. Smout, A History of the Scottish People, 1560-1830, p. 394.
 4. J. MacInnes, The Evangelical Movement in the Highlands of Scotland, 1688 to 1800, p. 133.

Certainly these counts and the methods adopted are open to all the objections and criticisms discussed in Section I, but one might well be justified in assuming that large deviations from the norms could indicate important trends in the Highlanders' occupation choices.

Such a significant deviation is apparent in the categories of unskilled occupations, for the percentages of men with Highland names employed as workmen, labourers, porters and carmen (or carters)¹ was in both periods significantly higher than the norms - 34.4% as against 22.5% in the period 1761-75, and 53.0% as against 31.0% in the period 1776-90. This would seem to indicate that a large number of the men following these occupations at this time were of Highland origin and that Highlanders tended to find their way into this type of work. The figures would also suggest that many Highlanders found employment as sailors or mariners, although the percentages here did not differ so very much from the norms - 22.4%:22.5% and 32.3%:31.0%. It is very probable, however, that the numbers of Highlanders employed as sailors and mariners have been somewhat underestimated, particularly in the latter period, for many of the seamen serving on board the merchant ships sailing from Greenock were recruited from among the crews of the herring busses² with

1. Imperial Dictionary of the English Language, Ed. C. Amundale (London, 1882-83), Vol. 1, p. 400.

2. Reports on British Fisheries, P.P. (First Series), Vol. X, p. 141.

their heavy quota of Highlanders.¹

Prominent as the Highland migrants in Greenock were as seamen, labourers, workmen, porters and carmen, however, it is quite clear that by no means all of them were employed in such occupations, and that large numbers were also able to secure openings in the more skilled trades and crafts of the period. Thus Highland boys were already making their way to Greenock to serve apprenticeships in a variety of trades. In February, 1789, for instance, a certain "Alexander McKinnon, son of Angus McKinnon, Farmer on the Isle of Sky," engaged in an indenture with John Carmichael, watch and clock maker in Greenock, to serve an apprenticeship of 5½ years.² In the next few years, youths from Kilmun, Lochgilphead, Islay and Kintyre also became apprentices as wrights, merchants, shipbuilders and bakers.³ One cannot of course tell from these entries whether this practice was a common one or whether these were exceptional cases, but once more an examination of the occupations shown in the Greenock Marriage Registers would indicate that many Highlanders were indeed following skilled trades and occupations (Tables 26 and 27). The Tables show that in several skilled occupations there were substantial numbers of Highlanders, and that in several

1. See Table 6.

2. Reg. Ho., S.C. Renfrewshire, Record of Deeds and Protests, Vol. 3, February 13, 1789.

3. Ibid, Vol. 4, May 20, 1790, and December 31, 1790; Vol. 12, April 5, 1804; Vol. 13, October 8, 1807; S.C. Renfrewshire, Register of Deeds, Vol. 2, February 1, 1812.

instances the percentages were above the norms.

Of particular interest are the figures for the occupation of cooper, a trade closely connected with the herring fisheries. In both periods the coopers with Highland names were significantly above the norm percentages, and the results would certainly confirm the statement made by R.M. Smith that in the late eighteenth century the curing and cooperage trade "was mostly in the hands of carvers from Bute and other parts of the Highlands".¹ The occupation of carpenter was another trade having some connection with the herring industry,² and in the period 1776-90 the carpenters with Highland names were very substantially above the norm percentages. The related trade of lawyer in Greenock was practically dominated by persons with Highland surnames in the period 1776-90, but in this instance only a very small number of men following this occupation appeared in the marriage registers.

Other occupations in which the Highland migrants featured prominently were the trades of shoemaker and baker. The figures for weavers, tailors and hattersmen tended to fluctuate around the norms, but those for fleshers, wrights, masons and smiths appear to have fallen significantly short of the norms. Nevertheless, despite the low figures in

1. R.M. Smith, The History of Greenock, p. 191; see also A. Brown, The Early Annals of Greenock, p. 90.

2. Reports on British Fisheries, P.P. (First Series), Vol. X, p. 107.

these latter trades, it is clear that the expansion of the economy and the population of Greenock in the late eighteenth century was providing an increasing number of openings for Highlanders in skilled trades and occupations.

Many Highlanders seem also to have found employment in the retail trade in Greenock in the eighteenth century. The Marriage Registers did not often list men as shopkeepers, but a convenient source giving the names of shopkeepers in the town in the 1780s are the Assessed Taxes Schedules showing the taxes imposed on shops and shopkeepers.¹ The results obtained from an analysis of these are given in Table 28, together with a count for the related occupation of Spirit and Ale Retailer taken from the names of those engaged in this field listed in the Greenock Advertiser in 1804.² Since both men and women were included in the lists of shopkeepers and Spirit and Ale Retailers, the norms chosen here were those for the surnames of men and women together in the Marriage Registers for the appropriate periods. The counts for the shopkeepers and Ale and Spirit Retailers, on the other hand, were based on lists giving the names of persons in the general population following these occupations, but any discrepancies involved were probably not serious enough to introduce any substantial error, particularly when it was only the broad trends that were being investigated.

1. Reg. Ho. Assessed Taxes Schedules, Shop Tax, E 326/4.

2. G.A., November 9, 1804.

These trends seem to have been for the Highlanders in Greenock to fill positions as shopkeepers and Spirit and Ale Retailers roughly in proportion to their numbers in the general population.

So far as industrialists are concerned, there are not nearly enough names appearing in the Greenock Marriage Registers under this designation to provide meaningful figures, but certain Highlanders and men from Bute were active in the nascent industries in the town. These included Robert MacFie from Bute, prominent in the sugar refining industry,¹ and "Archibald Campbell of Askomal, residing at Greenock", one of the partners in the Greenock Glass Work Company in 1793.² Highlanders were also very prominent as merchants in the town, and among the most noted were Duncan Campbell of Glendaruel and other members of the Highland landed families named in Table 10. Excelling all of these, however, was a certain Walter Ritchie from Argyll. Ritchie built up a thriving and prosperous business, and by 1803 his firm possessed eleven fine vessels making up one of the most impressive fleets in Great Britain at the time.³ All this biographical evidence, moreover, is supported by an analysis of the surnames of men designated as merchants.

1. See p. 84 and Table 14.

2. Reg. No., Minutes of the Particular Register of Sines, Renfrewshire, Vol. 15, January 9, 1793, March 1, 1793, Vol. 20, January 3, 1801, RS 81/15, 20.

3. Greenock Telegraph, February 2, 1899.

in the Marriage Registers for 1761-75 and 1776-90, the results of which are given in Tables 26 and 27. There the percentage of merchants with Highland surnames was slightly below the norm in the period 1776-90, but above the norm in the period 1761-75. The word 'merchant' of course could be used at this time for men engaged in very small enterprises, but the figures do indicate that a substantial number of Highlanders were involved in trade at all levels in Greenock in the late eighteenth century.

Another sphere in which the Highland migrants in Greenock were very prominent in the eighteenth century was the Customs service. Several of the high officials in the service at Greenock and Port Glasgow in this period were Highlanders, among them Alexander Campbell of Inverawe, Surveyor-General of the Ports from Greenock to Ayr in the 1760s,¹ Sir James Campbell of Inverneill, appointed Collector of the Customs at Port Glasgow in 1789,² and Alexander Campbell, son of a tackaman at Kilmorich, appointed Comptroller of Customs at Port Glasgow in 1784.³ The commander of the Revenue Cutter, Prince of Wales, moreover, was a certain Colin Campbell from Argyll, who later took up

1. See Table 12.

2. Reg. Ho., Scottish Board of Customs, Minute Books, Vol. 23, July 29, 1789, CE 1/23; Minutes of the Particular Register of Sines, Argyll, Vol. 6, September 14, 1792, RS 65/6.

3. See Table 13.

permanent residence in Greenock.¹ Other ranks and grades of the service, too, it seems were recruited to a considerable extent from the Highlands, for a significant number of the personnel employed had Highland surnames. (See Table 29). The Highland element was significantly above the norm in 1750, and though the percentage of persons with Highland names in the employ of the Customs in Greenock did not increase commensurately with the increase in the numbers of Highlanders in the town between 1750 and 1790, nevertheless, there appears to have been a substantial number of Highlanders employed in the service throughout the later years of the eighteenth century.

The Customs service at all levels was, of course, a ripe field for patronage in the eighteenth century, and the Minute Books of the Scottish Board of Customs reveal frequent entries showing how certain individuals were able to obtain particular positions for their friends and acquaintances. On April 3, 1787, for instance, it was recorded that "The Right Honourable Ilay Campbell, Esq., Lord Advocate.... signified his being extremely obliged for the notice given of additional Tidewaiters to be appointed at Port Glasgow and Greenock, and recommending the following persons, viz. Charles McArthur, John McIntyre, John Bruce, John Paul,

1. Reg. Ho., Scottish Board of Customs, Minute Books, Vol. 8, December 4, 1750, CE 1/8; Minutes of the Particular Register of Sasines, Argyll, Vol. 6, December 17, 1788, RS 65/6; Minutes of the Particular Register of Sasines, Renfrewshire, Vol. 21, July 1, 1801, RS 81/21.

Angus Black, Thomas McNeillage, and Thomas Murdoch".¹ The system of patronage is also seen in operation in a letter written by a certain Donald McDonald of Uist in 1798 to Hector MacDonald Buchanan, W.S., the latter being the third son of Coll MacDonald of Boisdale.²

"Sir,

Upon my arrival here (Greenock) I delivered your letter to Mr. Duncan Campbell who was pleased to speak to the Collector of the Customs of Port Glasgow, who told him that no such thing was done by him, and that my request must be given by the Commissioners with whom I beg you will make interest as there is two vacancies here at present. I place all my confidence in you...."³

There is no indication that McDonald's request was successful, and probably he did not have such powerful friends as, for example, Colin Campbell of Balliveolan in Lismore. In 1792 Campbell became a Landwaiter in the Customs at Greenock, and on his appointment he received a letter of congratulation from a friend, Murdoch MacLean, whom he was replacing. "I am exceedingly happy to understand from Sir James Campbell," wrote MacLean, "that from some friendly

1. Scottish Board of Customs, Minute Books, Vol. 21, April 3, 1787, CE 1/21.

2. The Society of Writers to His Majesty's Signet With a List of the Members.....(Edinburgh 1936),

3. Reg. Ho., Rosa Estate muniments, GD/47/679.

channel the Lords of the Treasury have been induced to act very handsomely towards you".¹ Maclean had been disappointed in his position at Greenock, and complained that he had not made very much money out of it.

Some Highlanders, however, would have special qualifications for the Customs service at Greenock in that they were able to speak Gaelic. That such a consideration influenced the Board in their appointments is shown by a memorial to the Lords of Treasury on 25th June, 1751, stating that a certain William White, "lately appointed to be a Surveyor on the West Coast of Argyllshire" did not know "the highland Tongue, which is the Language in that Country", and presenting "to their Lordships....Dougal Campbell as a fit person for that Station".² A knowledge of Gaelic would clearly be an advantage for the Customs officers stationed at Greenock, as well as at ports in the Highlands, for many ships with Highland masters called in at Greenock and Port Glasgow. In the Minutes of the Scottish Customs Board for January 9, 1777, for instance, we read of the captain of a ship carrying oats to the Clyde being questioned by the Comptroller and Collector at Port Glasgow in Gaelic "because he did not seem to understand English well".³

1. Reg. Ho., Campbell of Balliveolan Papers, GD/13/213.

2. Scottish Board of Customs, Minute Books, Vol. 8, June 25, 1751, CE 1/8.

3. Ibid, Vol. 15, CE 1/15.

Nevertheless, although some Highlanders appointed to the Customs at Greenock and Port Glasgow might have had special qualifications, the whole atmosphere of the service at these ports, as at all the stations in the eighteenth century, was one of influence, patronage and amateurism. Close relations existed between Customs officials and local merchants, and these relations were often cemented by family ties and marriages. Jean Campbell, the daughter of Alexander Campbell of Inverawe, the Surveyor-General of the Ports from Greenock to Ayr, for example, was married to Duncan Campbell of Auchlian, a prominent merchant and baillie in Greenock.¹ Not surprisingly complaints appeared from time to time that officials displayed "unwarrantable partial Indulgence to Merchants,"² or that certain officers were suspected of "being concerned in Trade".³ The whole operation of the service, together with appointments and promotions, seems to have been much more a matter of family influence and ties of friendship than of any real concern for the interest of the revenue.

Such a situation appears to have continued at Greenock and Port Glasgow until at least the end of the eighteenth

1. O.P.R., Marriage Register, Greenock Mid Parish, 564/1, January 28, 1778; see Table 10.

2. Scottish Board of Customs, Minute Books, Vol. 34, April 15, 1802, CE 1/34.

3. Ibid, Vol. 12, January 25, 1775, CE 1/12.

century, but in the early years of the nineteenth century, the pleasant world of patronage and amateurism was rudely shattered. In 1801 there was an inquiry into the working of the Customs service at Greenock and Fort Glasgow, and in particular into the conduct of two Highland officers, the Collector, Sir James Campbell, and the Comptroller, Alexander Campbell. The report was a severe indictment of these two men, for it was stated that they appeared "not only to have neglected, but....to have taken a decisive part against the Interest of the Revenue".¹ At Inveraray, an outpost under their control, herring bounties had been given out to merchants and shipowners without any proper checking of their entitlements. During the year 1801-2, when these officials had been suspended, less than £50 had been paid out in herring bounties at Inveraray, but the average for the previous five years had been £380!² Understandably the Board decided to dismiss these two Highland officials, and piously it declared its intention of creating a more professional service. "From experience," they declared, "(we) find that it is next to impossible for persons who have not been regularly bred in the service to carry on the Business of Collector and Comptroller of the Customs at Fort Glasgow and Greenock."³

1. Ibid, Vol. 34, April 15, 1802, CE 1/34.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

Clearly the days of patronage and influence which had helped so many members of the Highland landed families to obtain posts in the Customs were passing, and this change in the whole atmosphere of the service was perhaps closely linked with the fact that such families and their representatives appeared less frequently in Greenock during the nineteenth century.¹

While numbers of the Highland migrants in Greenock in the eighteenth century were obtaining good positions in the Customs, others were entering into one or other of the professions. Medicine was represented by John Campbell of Daltot² and Archibald Campbell of Auchlian,³ the legal profession by Patrick Campbell of Ruddle,⁴ and teaching by John Woodrow from Kilmichael Glassary⁵ and Colin Lamont from Cowal.⁶ With the opening of the Gaelic Church in Greenock in 1792, moreover, Highland-born ministers began to appear in the town.⁷

The foregoing descriptions of the occupations followed by the Highland male migrants in Greenock reveal that they had apparently certain distinct preferences. They were

1. See p. 78.

2. See Table 10.

3. See p. 73.

4. See Table 10.

5. See p. 73.

6. See p. 72.

7. See pp. 199-200; Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae, Vol. 3, p. 200.

particularly prominent in the Customs service, in the trades of cooper, carpenter, shoemaker and baker, as merchants and shopkeepers, and in the less skilled occupations of labourer, workman, boatman, porter and seaman. Perhaps the most important conclusion to emerge from an analysis of the Highlanders' occupation choices in Greenock, however, is that the Highland migrants were not employed in only a few activities, but that they were participating in a wide range of trades and occupations in the second half of the eighteenth century.

Many Highland women as well as men seem to have arrived in Greenock during the second half of the eighteenth century, but unfortunately it is much more difficult to obtain exact information about the occupations they followed. The Greenock Marriage Registers, while giving in most entries the occupation of the man contracting marriage, rarely indicate the position held by the girl. There is every reason to believe, however, that most Highland girls arriving in Greenock at this time would find employment in some form or other of domestic service, for there were then few other types of work open to women. This view does to a certain extent receive confirmation from a scrutiny of the surnames listed in the Assessed Taxes Schedules for the Female Servants Tax (1785-92),¹ the results of which are shown in Table 30.

1. Reg. Ho., Assessed Taxes Schedules, Female Servants Tax, E 326/6.

Here the percentage figure for those having Highland names is 31.8% as compared with the norm of 30.7% taken from the Marriage Registers, and thus it seems clear that Highland girls were moving in considerable numbers into positions as domestic servants in Greenock during the second half of the eighteenth century. Not very much is known about the conditions and terms of agreement for girls in domestic service at this time, but it appears that "they were in the way of changing their residence every term".¹ A little of the curtain was lifted during the discussions before Paisley Presbytery in 1790-91 of a case involving an accusation against the Rev. Alan Mcaulay of the Old Parish Church in Greenock of his having contracted an irregular marriage. Three of his servants were Highland girls, and the whole case reveals a fascinating situation where several Highland girls in a family would one after the other find work in Greenock as domestic servants. Once settled in the town they would then move around from household to household at frequent intervals until, after varying lengths of time, they were able to select a husband from amongst the town's male population.²

1. Reg. Ho., Paisley Presbytery Records, Minutes, Vol. 12, December 15, 1790, CH 2/294/12.

2. Ibid, Vol. 11, May 5, 1790, CH 2/294/11; Vol. 12, November 16, 1790, December 15, 1790, May 16, 17 and 18, 1791, July 19, 1791, November 16, 1791, CH 2/294/12.

NINETEENTH CENTURY

Although the conclusions drawn from the name count method adopted for determining the occupations chosen by Highlanders in Greenock in the eighteenth century are of necessity all rather tentative, there is much more reliable evidence available concerning the occupations followed by the Highland and other migrants in the town in the second half of the nineteenth century. From 1851 the census enumerations made at ten-yearly intervals asked for a subject's place of birth and occupation, and the Enumeration Books used in compiling the data are invaluable sources. Not all of the enumerators, it is true, were of equal efficiency and accuracy in carrying out their tasks. Thus in 1861, for instance, one unfortunate enumerator in Greenock found himself in a brothel. He decided to improve upon the occasion by giving a lecture to the girls on their way of life, whereupon they attacked him to such good purpose that he fled and gave up his job.¹ Some of the local citizens, too, seem to have believed that the whole scheme heralded some fell design to levy a new tax on them, and thus another enumerator found that 14 houses had been shut up!² Nevertheless, such incidents were rather more significant in that they gave the enumerators a good fund of stories than in detracting from the value and reliability of their returns as evidence.

1. G.A. April 11, 1861.

2. Ibid.

The Census Enumeration Books were therefore used with some confidence to discover, in the first instance, the general pattern of the occupations followed by the Highland and Irish born males of fourteen and over living in Greenock in the years 1851 and 1891. The results are outlined in Tables 31 and 32, the Categories shown being those chosen by the Census officials for the year 1891. In addition to the Categories given in the Census Report, however, the present researcher has made further sub-divisions; Category III (Commercial) has been divided into Commercial and Conveyance sections; and Category V (Industrial) has been divided into a section (VA) which includes men working in shops, and another (VB) which includes all workers employed in factories.¹ As a basis for comparison, the norm figures for the percentages of the total male working population of fourteen and over in the town in the various Categories are also given.

The results for the Highland migrants would indicate at first glance that they did not choose significantly different occupations from those of the general working population. In each of the years 1851 and 1891, however, they did tend to favour the Professional and Agricultural Categories more than the norms. In 1891, moreover, there was also a distinctly significant preference displayed for occupations concerned with transportation and for employment in shops.

1. See Appendix 2 for the trades and occupations in the various Categories.

Nevertheless, the great majority of Highland men, like the majority of the men in the town, were employed in occupations in the Industrial Category, even although they did tend to be under-represented in this sphere in both years.

The occupation choices made by the Highland migrants reveal some interesting contrasts with those of the Irish-born workers. Like the Highlanders, the Irish were well represented in occupations connected with Transportation, but they were much more prominent in the Industrial Category, and particularly in factory work. On the other hand, the Irish representation in the Professional, Domestic and Commercial Categories was very small, and indeed very much lower than the Highland or norm figures. Clearly there was a tendency for the members of the two communities to follow diverging occupational paths in Greenock, but it should again be noted that a very large percentage of the men in both migrant groups found employment in the same range of occupations - i.e. in the Industrial Category.

The occupation choices of the sons of Highland and Irish migrants, which are also shown in Tables 31 and 32, indicate certain quite distinct trends. Clearly we cannot rest too many conclusions on these results, since they are based on the relatively small numbers of youths who were still living with their parents, but they do suggest that there was a regression towards the mean in that the percentage figures for the sons of Highlanders and the sons of Irishmen in the various

Categories tended in general to be closer to the norm figures than those of their fathers. Thus the sons of Highlanders were employed in factories and shops to a much greater extent than their fathers, but they were much less likely to be engaged in occupations connected with Transportation. One interesting development was the strong tendency displayed for the sons of Highlanders to take up Commercial work, their percentages for this Category in each year being considerably above the norm figures and the percentages of their fathers.

Interesting as are the results obtained for the general patterns of occupational choice made by the Highland and Irish male migrants and their sons, the lumping together of all sorts of occupations in broad categories does tend to mask significant variations within trades and industries. This is seen, for instance, when the major industries in Greenock at this period are studied, and the numbers and percentages of the various migrant groups in the town who were employed in them are analysed and compared. The results of such an analysis, based again on the Census Enumeration Books for the years 1851 and 1891, are shown in Tables 33 and 34. The groups chosen were the migrants from the Highlands, from Dute, from Renfrewshire, from other parts of the Lowlands, from Ireland, from England and Abroad, and also the native-born Greenockians for purposes of comparison. Also shown are the norm percentages of the various groups (i.e. the percentages of the total male working population of

fourteen and over which were made up by the various groups).

A significant difference between the norm percentage for a migrant group and the percentage of the labour force in a particular industry made up by the members of the group would suggest that this group of migrants was, for some reason or another, avoiding or opting for employment in that industry.

From the figures shown in Tables 33 and 34, it would appear that the Highland migrants in Greenock during the second half of the nineteenth century did indeed have marked preferences for particular industries. They were especially prominent in the police force, on the railways, in the gas industry, and in the distilleries and breweries (in 1851), while in the large shipbuilding and related industries, and in the textile industry (in 1891), they took up employment roughly in proportion to their numbers in the total male working population. On the other hand, there were several industries such as the sugar refineries, the ropeworks, the various mills, and the potteries, where the Highlanders were much less in evidence, only 4.9% of the labour force in the sugar refineries in 1851, for instance, being Highlanders, and only 2.6% in 1891. It is also interesting to note that the old traditional image of the Highlander dominating the Lowland police forces receives strong confirmatory support from the figures, 50% of the Greenock police force in 1851 being of Highland origin as contrasted with a Highland norm of 16.7%, and 38.9% of Highland origin in 1891 compared with a norm of 8.5%.

The figures obtaining for the Irish migrants, like those of the Highlanders, reveal a distinctive pattern of employment in the various industries in Greenock at this period. It would appear, for instance, that the Irish spread themselves over most of the industries in the town, and they do not seem to have been absent from the labour force of any industries to the extent that the Highlanders were absent from the labour force of the sugar refineries, the potteries or the ropeworks. The Irish were indeed less prominent than the Highlanders in the police force or on the railways, but, on the other hand, they were present in much greater numbers in the sugar industry, the textile industry, and the paper mills than the Highlanders were. They practically dominated the sugar refining industry and provided the greater part of the labour force in the refineries, some 68.2% of those working there in 1851, and 60.9% in 1891 having been born in Ireland.

The local-born inhabitants of Greenock, as well as the other migrant groups in the town had also their own individual patterns of employment. The native-born Greenockians, for instance, provided a large part of the labour force in the ropeworks, in the potteries and in the shipyards, but only very few were employed in the police force. The migrants from Renfrewshire and the Lowlands of Scotland were spread relatively evenly over the various industries, but clearly there was a tendency for them to be prominent in the textile industry and on the railways, and alternatively for their numbers in the sugar

industry to be quite small. The migrants from England, for their part, were particularly prominent in the potteries and the textile industry, many skilled workers from England having been brought north to help establish these industries in Greenock.

To examine in more detail the occupational choices made by Highlanders and members of the other groups in Greenock in the nineteenth century, an analysis was also made of the labour force employed in the major trades and occupations in the town in the years 1851 and 1891. The results of this analysis are shown in Tables 35 and 36, the occupations being grouped into Skilled Trades, Professional Occupations, Occupations connected with Shops and Services, and Unskilled Occupations. These results amplify and extend the figures for the more general Categories given in Tables 31 and 32, and for the various industries in Tables 33 and 34.

One of the most significant features of the percentages given in Tables 35 and 36 is the fact that the Highland migrants were seemingly able to move into a wide variety of trades and occupations in Greenock. Considerable numbers were employed in the less skilled occupations as the traditional view would have it (1851: 18.7% as against a Norm of 16.7%; 1891: 6.8% as against a Norm of 8.5%), but clearly the Highland migrants were not being employed exclusively in this type of work. There were certain less skilled occupations such as carter and quay carter, however, which did seem to attract a significantly

high percentage of Highland workers, the figure for quay porters in 1851 being 47.6% as against the norm of 16.7%, and for carters in 1891 12.8% as against the norm of 8.5%. Many Highlanders, too, were employed as dock labourers, but the percentage figures here did not differ greatly from the norms. As in the eighteenth century, moreover, a very large number of Highlanders found their way into the merchant marine, the percentages being significantly high at 21.2% in 1851 and 17.8% in 1891.

The figures and percentages for the Highland migrants in the skilled trades also reveal several distinctive trends. In addition to providing the total labour force for the occupation of 'bagpiper' in 1851 in the person of Donald Carmichael from Kilcalmonell,¹ Highlanders were also prominent as carpenters, joiners and sawyers. The Highland migrants in fact supplied more carpenters to Greenock industry than did any other migrant group or indeed the local-born population, some 36.3% of the carpenters working in the town in 1851 and 31.5% in 1891 being of Highland origin.

The results obtained for the trade of cooper also display certain interesting features. In both 1851 and 1891 the percentages of Highlanders employed in this field were slightly below the norms, but it should be noted that local-born men provided considerably more than 50% of the labour force in this

1. 1851 Census Enumeration Book, Greenock, 438, No. 61, p. 7.

trade at these dates. This situation was almost certainly a consequence of the fact that the trade was declining in the nineteenth century,¹ and that fewer employment opportunities were therefore being afforded to migrants. The fact, moreover, that Highlanders were still able to obtain work as coopers to a greater extent than most other migrants supports the claim that in the eighteenth century men from the Highlands and Bute controlled this trade.² The sons and descendants of the earlier migrants would probably provide a large proportion of the labour force, and accordingly there might be a tendency for preference to be given to newcomers from the Highlands whenever openings were available.

Other occupations in which Highlanders in considerable numbers found employment were the trades of shoemaker, tailor, baker and fleshier. They would appear to have been particularly prominent as shoemakers, the percentage figures in both 1851 and 1891 being above the norms, but all of these trades as they expanded in the nineteenth century, seem to have provided openings for an increasing number of Highland migrants. Several other trades such as those of plumber, slater, tanner, smith, mason, brass worker and sailmaker, which employed considerable numbers of workers at this time, also attracted Highland workers, but save for the occupation of plumber in

1. R.M. Smith, The History of Greenock, p. 234; see also Tables 35 and 36: 1851 - 285 coopers, 1891 - 131 coopers.

2. See p. 111.

1851 (17.7% as against a norm of 16.7%) and Smith in 1891 (11.9% as against a norm of 8.5%), the percentage figures for these particular trades were always well below the norms. The percentages of masons who were Highlanders at 13.7% in 1851 and 5.5% in 1891, however, contrasted strikingly with the apparent failure of Highlanders to obtain employment in this trade in the eighteenth century.¹

In the professional group of occupations the Highland migrants were also reasonably well represented, although the percentage figures for doctors, teachers and lawyers were generally somewhat below the norms. The Customs service, as in the eighteenth century, also provided a ready field of employment for Highlanders, and the percentages at 25.8% in 1851 and 11.4% in 1891 seem to have been significantly high. Highlanders also participated to a significant extent in the retail trade in Greenock in the nineteenth century. The percentage figures for grocers and grocers' assistants were above the norms in both 1851 and 1891, while the figures for spirit dealers at 23.4% in 1851 and 20.0% in 1891 were very high. The Highlanders, however, appear to have avoided or to have been unable to secure employment as hawkers, only one Highland migrant occupying such a role in each of the years 1851 and 1891.

There are certain interesting parallels between the

1. See Tables 26 and 27.

patterns of employment displayed by the Highland migrants in the late eighteenth century, on the one hand, and in the second half of the nineteenth century, on the other. There is, for instance, a surprising similarity in the occupations which appear to have attracted Highland workers in significant numbers in each of the two periods. Thus a high and frequently significant percentage of the workers employed in Greenock as carpenters, coopers, shoemakers, bakers, sawyers, shopkeepers (grocers), spirit dealers, in the Customs service, and as quay labourers and other less skilled workers were revealed as being of Highland origin by the surname counts for the late eighteenth century, as well as by the census counts for 1851 and 1891. This would perhaps suggest that the pattern of occupational choice displayed by the Highland migrants in Greenock was indeed a quite distinct one, and that it persisted over a relatively long period of time. There is also the comforting conclusion to be drawn from the similarities that the surname counts did in fact provide valid evidence concerning the occupational choices made by Highland migrants in the eighteenth century and that the trends revealed by that method and shown in Tables 26-30 did indeed reflect underlying realities.

The patterns of occupational choice displayed by the Irish and other groups in Greenock in 1851 and 1891 differed quite considerably from that of the Highlanders. The Irish, for instance, were to be found much more in the less skilled

occupations than the Highlanders, and indeed in both years they formed in the region of 50% of the labour force in this type of work. They were especially prominent in the docks, some 64.8% of the dock labourers in 1851 and 49.5% in 1891 having been born in Ireland. Irishmen seem also to have dominated the street vending trades, particularly around the middle of the nineteenth century, for over 70% of the hawkers in 1851 were of Irish origin. Nevertheless, the Irish migrants were by no means confined to the less skilled occupations, and a fair sprinkling of them were to be found in almost all the professions and skilled trades in the town. They provided a significantly high percentage of the labour force in such trades as shoemaker, tailor, sawyer and mason in both 1851 and 1891, while throughout the second half of the nineteenth century the numbers of Irishmen serving as sailors or mariners seem to have been rising steadily. The Irish migrants seem also to have been moving into the Customs service in increasing numbers in this period, the percentage of the personnel there having been born in Ireland rising from 4.5% in 1851 to 15.9% in 1891 (norms: 22.6% in 1851 and 20.9% in 1891).

The other groups in the town, for their part, contrasted with the Irish, and to a lesser extent with the Highlanders, in that a smaller percentage of the members of each group was employed in the less skilled occupations. Nevertheless, these other groups, too, seemingly had preferences for

particular occupations. The local-born, for instance, were to be found in considerable numbers in all trades and occupations, but their percentage figures were especially high for such trades as baker, flesher, painter, plumber, joiner, cooper, brass worker and sailmaker, for the legal profession, and for the less skilled occupation of carter. Migrants from the Lowlands of Scotland, in contrast, were most prominent as doctors and teachers, as spirit dealers, and as slaters, tanners and masons. The migrants from Renfrewshire were to be found significantly in a similar range of occupations as migrants from other parts of Lowland Scotland, but in addition a large number of them found employment as carters, some 27.0% of the men in this occupation in 1851 hailing from Renfrewshire. Many of these had been born in Kilmacola parish, and most probably they had had considerable experience in this type of work before moving to Greenock. Migrants from England and other countries were employed in a wide variety of occupations, but they were perhaps most prominent in the Customs service and the merchant marine.

The occupational choices made by the female Highland and other migrants were also investigated, and the results of this investigation for 1851 and 1891 are shown in Tables 37 and 38. They reveal that the Highland women who took up employment in Greenock had also certain clear and distinct preferences for particular forms of employment. As in the

eighteenth century, a very large number of Highland women were employed as domestic servants in Greenock, and in both 1851 and 1891 somewhere in the region of 25% of the women engaged in domestic service in private households in the town were of Highland origin. Indeed the Highlands appear to have supplied more women for this type of work than any of the other migrant areas, and only the local-born group of women were present in domestic service in greater numbers. Other occupations which attracted Highland women in significant numbers were lodging house keepers and spirit dealers (in 1851). Many Highland women or girls also worked as dressmakers (though the percentages here were below the norms), several as grocers and hawkers, and a few found posts as teachers; but only a very small number indeed sought or obtained employment in the textile or other mills and factories in the town.

The women in the various other groups in Greenock, too, had apparently certain distinct occupational preferences. The women from England, the Lowlands and Renfrewshire were seemingly fairly evenly distributed over most of the occupations employing women and girls, but there was a tendency for them to be under-represented in the factories, and also for the Lowland women to fill a proportionately large number of the teaching posts in the town. Women who had been born in Greenock were also to be found working in all the occupations open to females, but they formed a

significantly high percentage of the ladies working as dressmakers and sempstresses. The numbers of local-born women employed in factories, however, rose sharply between 1851 and 1891, and by the latter date they formed a very large percentage of the female labour force working in the mills and factories in the town. Very large numbers of the women who had been born in Ireland were also employed in the mills and factories, and in 1851 they comprised about 50% of the female workers there. The Irish female migrants were also prominent as lodging house keepers and as hawkers, while numbers of them were to be found in almost all the other occupations open to women in Greenock. Thus, for instance, many Irish girls in Greenock found work as domestic servants, but here their percentage figures at 7.3% in 1851 and 6.3% in 1891 were significantly low as compared with those of the Highland girls.

The pattern of occupational choices displayed by the female Irish migrants in Greenock was thus quite distinct from that of the Highland women, and this contrast is shown even more clearly in Tables 39 and 40 where the occupations they followed are arranged into the general Categories used for the male migrants in Tables 31 and 32. There it is illustrated dramatically that overwhelmingly the Highland women in employment seem to have chosen to work in one or other of the occupations in the Domestic Category, while, on the other hand, a very large percentage of the Irish women

worked in factories. The tendency for the Highland women to avoid such work in the mills and factories is also again clearly demonstrated with only some 3.4% of them in employment following such occupations in 1851 against a norm of 18.7% of the general female population in the town in this type of work.

Also shown in Tables 39 and 40 are the occupational choices of the daughters of Highland and Irish migrants respectively, and here again the contrasts between the two groups are most striking. By and large the daughters of Highland parents chose the same pattern of occupations as their mothers, although there were indeed some significant variations. There was, for instance, a marked tendency for the daughters of Highland migrants to take up employment in the occupations in the Professional Category to a much greater extent than their mothers, and indeed than the norms of the general female population in both 1851 and 1891. They also seem to have opted for employment in shops much more than their mothers, but though a rather higher percentage of them were employed in factories (8.4% in 1851; 19.1% in 1891), they still very largely seem to have avoided this type of occupation and work. There was, moreover, a considerable drop in the percentage employed in the Domestic Category of occupations, but this result is most probably a factor

of the statistical method adopted. The figures were of necessity compiled only for those entries in the Enumeration Books describing the daughters of Highland parents who were living at home, but clearly there must have been many other daughters of Highland migrants in Greenock employed as domestic servants, who were living in the houses of their employers. The percentage figures in this Category, therefore, would almost certainly have been very much larger if all the daughters of Highlanders in the town could have been included. This also implies that the percentages in the other Categories might also have to be revised slightly to give the true figures. The same factor would affect the results obtained for the daughters of the Irish migrants, but this can scarcely have been responsible for the very different patterns of occupational choices displayed by these girls. Here it is clear that the great majority of the daughters of Irish parents found employment in the factories, and their percentage figures for this Category of 68.8% in 1851 and 58.6% in 1891 were very much higher than those for their mothers or for the general female working population in the town.

FACTORS DETERMINING CHOICE OF OCCUPATIONS

The foregoing discussions and the results shown in Tables 26-40 illustrating the types of employment taken up by Highlanders and by the members of other groups in Greenock in the late eighteenth century and in the second half of the nineteenth century would suggest that there were several important factors involved in an individual migrant's choice of occupation. For many, of course, necessity must have been the principal consideration. Clearly the large numbers of Highlanders and Irishmen engaged in labouring and semi-skilled work indicates that many of them were ready to take up any employment that offered itself, and that the traditional image of the strong Highland or Irish migrants working mainly as labourers is not without a certain foundation.

Even those Highland migrants who were employed in the more menial activities in Greenock, however, were far from being unskilled and untutored workers. Thorold Rogers correctly pointed out that "there is infinitely more distance between a savage and the least skilled labourer.....than there is between the least skilled labourer and the most competent and active manager, inventor or employer";¹ and undoubtedly the Highland migrants employed in labouring work in Greenock had many useful and valuable skills. In

1. Thorold Rogers, The Industrial and Commercial History of England (London, 1892), p. 255; also L.G. Johnson, The Social Evolution of Industrial Britain (Liverpool, 1959), pp. 23-7.

their former homes they had learned how to handle boats, how to work with a wide variety of tools and implements, and how to perform many traditional tasks involving considerable skill and ingenuity. These skills and techniques formed an essential part of the working equipment of men hoping to obtain employment as labourers, boatmen and workmen in Greenock - in occupations, that is, which are normally (and perhaps erroneously) described as unskilled.¹ Thus the factors determining the movement of so many Highlanders into less skilled occupations in Greenock were at least two-fold: on the one hand, there was an increasing demand for semi-skilled workers in Greenock as the town grew and expanded; and on the other, there was a ready supply of labour in the Highlands (and in Ireland and elsewhere) which possessed the skills, crafts, physique and attitudes required of the labour force in a seaport and industrial town.

The importance of the skills already acquired by the migrants before they settled in Greenock is also evident in the large number of Highlanders who were able to find employment as skilled tradesmen in the town. Some Highland youths did come to Greenock to serve an apprenticeship,² but the great majority of the migrants finding work as tradesmen had probably been skilled craftsmen in their home environment. There is no evidence to suggest that the early

1. Johnson, op. cit., pp. 23-7.

2. See p. 110.

trade unions were strong enough to prevent the employment of workers from outside the town,¹ and the expansion of the local economy must have created a larger demand for skilled tradesmen than could be provided for by the apprentices trained in local industry. Skilled workers, therefore, could normally find openings, and the reports for many Highland parishes in The Statistical Account of Scotland and The New Statistical Account of Scotland illustrate that substantial numbers of such craftsmen as shoemakers, tailors and carpenters were to be found in the Highlands.² The nineteenth century Census Enumeration Books also reveal that there were many skilled artisans in certain areas like Mid Argyll which sent large numbers of migrants to Greenock.³

The importance of knowledge and skills acquired in the home environment as a factor in determining the type of work secured by newcomers settling in Greenock is further emphasised by a consideration of the occupational choices made by migrants from particular areas of the Highlands and other places. Thus, for instance, 10 out of the 32 men

1. See pp. 231-3.

2. O.S.A., Vol. 4, pp. 33-9 (Kilmoran), Vol. 5, p. 293 (Inveraray), Vol. 13, p. 660 (Kilmichael Glassary), Vol. 19, pp. 323-4 (S. Knapdale); N.S.A., Vol. VII, Argyle, p. 251 (Lismore), p. 541 (Jura).

3. Isobel M.L. Robertson, 'Changing Form and Function of Settlement in South West Argyll, 1841-1961', in The Scottish Geographical Magazine, Vol. 83 (1967), p. 31.

employed in distilleries and breweries in Greenock in 1851 were from Islay,¹ an island where whisky distilling was finally established.² In the same way, large numbers of men and women from the neighbourhood of Paisley were to be found in the labour force of the textile mills in Greenock in the second half of the nineteenth century. The very considerable numbers of Irish migrants who were also employed in the textile industries in Greenock might similarly be partly explained by their acquiring skills in their former homes working to supply the linen industry of Ulster. The farm workers of Kilmacola, too, found suitable employment for their skills as carters in Greenock,³ while men from England formed as much as 28.2% of the labour force of the pottery works in Greenock in 1851. That men with special skills could be attracted to Greenock over relatively long distances, moreover, is shown by the fact that 23 of the workers employed in the sugar refining industry in 1851, the same number in fact as hailed from the Highlands, had been born in Germany.⁴

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1. Counts made from the 1851 Census Enumeration Books, Greenock, 433-44.
 2. Margaret C. Storrie, 'The Census of Scotland as a Source in the Historical Geography of Islay', in The Scottish Geographical Magazine, Vol. 78 (1962), pp. 152-65.
 3. See p. 135.
 4. Information and figures abstracted from the 1851 and 1851 Census Enumeration Books, Greenock, 433-44 and 564/1-2.

Factors other than skills acquired in the home environment, however, are required to explain the fact that such large numbers of Highland migrants were able to secure employment in, for example, the police force and as domestic servants in Greenock. Certainly many of the Highland girls might have had some training which fitted them for domestic service, but it is difficult to escape the conclusion that many Highland men and women had certain qualities of character which enabled them to find employment in these spheres. Thus, for example, Professor J. Walker in his An Economical History of the Hebrides and Highlands of Scotland (London, 1812) referred to the "laborious assiduity" of the Highland migrants to the Lowlands, and asserted that they were "a sensible, virtuous, hardy and laborious set of people".¹ Mrs. Anne Grant of Laggen, for her part, praised the "unservile courtesy, in the lower class" of Highlander,² while a local writer in Greenock echoed similar sentiments in an article in the Greenock Advertiser in 1855 when he claimed confidently that "no other class, equally poor (as the Highlanders) is so loyal, so peaceable, so contented with their privations, so thankful for their privileges. No other class is so sensitively alive to kindness or more thoroughly prepared

1. Op. cit., Vol. I, p. 11.

2. Letters from the Mountains (London, 1809), Vol. I, p. 19.

to requite it with a warm response of gratitude."¹ The greater part of these eulogies might perhaps be discounted, but clearly the long continuing dominance of the Highlanders in such occupations as the police and domestic service would indicate that they indeed had qualities which appealed to the local employers and magistrates. Most probably many of the Highlanders did conform in fact to that type of steady, reliable, dependable person legend has delighted in depicting.

Nevertheless, it would be extremely rash to assume that it was only because the Highlanders possessed superior qualities of character that they were appointed to positions in the police force and as domestic servants in preference to migrants from other areas. Equally, if not more, important was the fact that they had early established a clear dominance in these particular occupations in the town. In the eighteenth century the Highlanders made up a very large percentage of the migrants settling in Greenock, and not surprisingly Highland women were recruited in large numbers as servants, while Highland men found employment in the town guard or as gaolers. There were not at this time sufficient numbers of men involved to support statistical calculations, but certainly many of the individuals mentioned in the Greenock Town Council Records had Highland surnames. Once a tradition of employing Highlanders in these occupations

1. G.A., March 16, 1855.

had been established, moreover, there would most probably be a tendency for the custom to continue, particularly if the Highland labour force proved in general satisfactory.

Connections would be formed with particular areas of the Highlands, and migrants from these areas who had found employment in certain occupations would enable other and later migrants to find work in similar or related jobs.

Members of other migrant groups, of course, acted in the same way, as can be seen, for instance, in the dominance of the Irish in the sugar industry in Greenock during the second half of the nineteenth century. Several of the sugar refineries, for example, seem to have been closely linked with particular parts of Ireland, and one refinery was popularly known as "Billie Conn's sugarhouse" after a certain Irish foreman whose name was well known to Irish immigrants. Men from Ireland landing in Greenock would ask for "Billie Conn's sugarhouse", and then on their presenting themselves there and on their making known their proper origins and religious faith, they would normally find employment.¹

Not only were the migrants who had established a strong position in a particular industry or occupation able to secure openings for later settlers from their original home areas, but there is also some evidence to indicate that many of their

1. Oral evidence: a descendant of the said Billie Conn, and other workers in sugar refineries.

own sons, too, would be found positions. Thus some 33.4% of the youths born in Greenock who were working as carpenters in 1851, and whose parents could be traced in the Census Enumeration Books, had fathers who had been born in the Highlands; while 59.9% of the youths born in Greenock who were working in sugar refineries in 1891, and whose parents could be traced in the Enumeration Books, had fathers who had been born in Ireland.¹ There is no proof, of course, that the fathers of the particular individuals concerned were themselves carpenters or sugar refinery workers, but the figures do show that the sons of Highland and Irish migrants were able to take up employment as carpenters and in the sugar refineries respectively in significantly large numbers. Nevertheless, one should not exaggerate this tendency for the sons of Highlanders to take up the same type of employment as their fathers. Table 41 illustrates the extent to which the sons of Highland migrants followed the occupations and trades of their fathers, and the results show that 71.0% of such youths in 1851 and 61.4% in 1891 were following different occupations from those of their fathers. The figures do indicate that about 30-40% of these youths took up employment which had some connection with that of their fathers, but the majority seem to have made their own and individual way into the occupations open to them in the town.

1. Calculations from the 1851 and 1891 Census Enumeration Books, Greenock, 433-44, and 564/1-2.

As well as the tendency for members of the various migrant groups to dominate an industry or occupation in which they had become well established, there were other reasons why Highlanders were able to find employment in certain occupations in Greenock. In the first place, many Highlanders had secured influential positions in local society, government and commerce in the eighteenth century,¹ and it is natural to believe that such individuals would be ready and willing to recruit men and women from the Highlands to positions where they had influence. A possible example of such influence in operation is disclosed in the Greenock Town Council Records in 1775, when it was reported that Colin Campbell, merchant was bound in caution on the appointment of a certain Donald Campbell as Town Officer.² Another example of patronage is to be seen in the appointment of Colin Lamont to the position of Grammar School Master in Greenock in 1781, for he had been a tutor in the family of Mr. George Robertson, merchant and baillie in Greenock, when that gentleman had previously lived in Rothesay.³ In the nineteenth century, too, there were many Highlanders with influential positions in the town who could continue the exercise of patronage to secure openings for fresh waves of migrants from the Highlands. One

1. See pp. 113-15, 120; also pp. 154-8.

2. Greenock T.C.R., December 12, 1775.

3. G. Williamson, Old Greenock (Second Series), p. 184; Commissariat of the Isles, Register of Testaments, Vol. 7, November 24, 1813.

Highlander who probably found his way to Greenock by this path was the teacher of the Ragged School in 1850, a Mr. Stewart from Perthshire. He had entered the army and served there for 21 years, eventually reaching the rank of sergeant and assistant schoolmaster in the 93rd Highlanders. On his discharge he was highly recommended "by Colonel Spink and his other officers....to the Committee of the Ragged School Association", and was accordingly appointed to the post in Greenock.¹

Nevertheless, although the influence possessed by Highlanders already firmly established in the local community might have been an important factor in securing certain types of employment for newcomers from the Highlands, the whole pattern of occupation choice displayed by the Highland migrants in Greenock (and indeed by the members of other migrant groups) would perhaps suggest that there was a strong element of personal choice and preference involved. There is, for instance, a clear indication from the tables showing occupational choices that the Highland migrants were not particularly anxious to take up employment in factories, mills or sugar refineries where there would be a strict regime and rigid industrial discipline, and that they apparently preferred occupations such as that of policeman, carter, transport and railway worker, sailor and machiner, porter and

1. G.A., August 9, 1850.

shepherd which did not involve adhering to a strict routine throughout every minute of the day. The Highland migrants, it is true, were present in the shipyards in considerable numbers, but here there was perhaps a less strict routine, and the work demanded the application and utilisation of individual skills. Even the presence of Highlanders in significant numbers in the gas industry, an industry by no means providing pleasant conditions for its work force in the nineteenth century, could be explained by special factors. In Greenock the gas undertaking was a municipal enterprise,¹ and the influence possessed by Highland councillors and leading citizens might have enabled Highland migrants to move into this sphere as well as into other occupations under the control of the local authorities. Many of the men listed under the gas industry, moreover, were designated as gas fitters, and as such they might have been employed on various tasks throughout the town and not always in the gas works. The Highland women settling in Greenock, too, were also apparently reluctant to work in factories and mills, and only a very few of them took up this type of work. The daughters of the Highland migrants also clearly avoided work in factories, but their sons seem to have been much more ready to take up employment there. One might surmise that there was a strong family pressure to keep the girls

1. R.S. Smith, The History of Greenock, pp. 46-7.

out of a type of work that was not considered desirable, but that the sons of Highlanders had already adopted attitudes towards employment typical of a lowland industrial town.

The general reluctance displayed by the Highland migrants to undertake work in factories was not by any means a unique phenomenon, however, for in the early years of the Industrial Revolution the factory owners throughout Britain found it extremely difficult to obtain recruits save where severe pressures of one sort or another compelled workers to take up such employment.¹ Perhaps the crucial element in the situation in Greenock lay in the fact that large numbers of Highlanders were able to exercise their preferences through the influence and occupational dominance their predecessors had achieved, while other less fortunate migrants like the Irish were forced to take up the less attractive occupations. In other places where these factors were not present, the pattern of occupational choice displayed by the Highland migrants would most probably be quite different. In the Paisley district, for instance, the pattern of employment for women and girls from the Highlands appears to have differed markedly from that of the Highland women in Greenock, for in evidence before the Children's Employment Commissioners in 1843 it was stated that the occupation of bleachfield

1. J.L. Hammond and Barbara Hammond, The Town Labourer (London, 1928), pp. 17-18; C. Hill, The Reformation to the Industrial Revolution (London, 1967), pp. 214-15.

worker in the neighbourhood was "almost monopolized by girls from certain spots in the Highlands",¹ and that in the woman's house or hostel for bleachfield workers 99 out of 100 girls were from the Highlands.² The Highland girls had begun to enter this occupation in the eighteenth century, and girls from certain areas such as Tarbert, Lochgilphead and Lochaber continued to dominate it well into the nineteenth century.³ This would suggest that the factor of occupation dominance and the establishment of a pattern and tradition of work and employment were distinctly important factors in determining the occupational choices of Highland girls in this neighbourhood. Such factors, as we have seen, were also important amongst the Highlanders in Greenock, but there they led the Highland girls not into factories and textile mills, but into domestic service. It would appear, therefore, that further research into the occupation choices made by Highland migrants in several other lowland towns and cities would be very useful in increasing our knowledge and understanding of the whole process and of the factors which determined the patterns of employment displayed by the Highland migrants. The research model provided here for Greenock might serve as a basis for other investigations, and special

1. Parliamentary Employment Commission, 1843. P.P., 1843, Vol. XV, p. 125.

2. Ibid., p. 126.

3. Ibid., p. 124.

consideration could be given to those occupations and industries which were shown to have attracted Highlanders in significant numbers in this particular town. In other towns, moreover, information might well be available concerning the relative rates of wages paid in different trades and occupations. Clearly this would also be an important factor in determining a migrant's choice of occupation, but so far as Greenock was concerned, there was not sufficient data in the relevant sources to enable one to make meaningful comparisons between the various trades and industries.

CHAPTER 5SOCIAL STATUS AND SOCIAL MOBILITY

Even as they moved into a wide variety and range of occupations in Greenock in the eighteenth century, so, too, the highland migrants were to be found amongst all the social classes in the town. The large number of Highlanders who worked as labourers and porters, for instance, formed part of the lower ranks of society, and there were also many Highlanders among the poor who required assistance in the town. It was reported in The Statistical Account of Scotland, for instance, that "663 of 1135 children whose parents are unable to defray the expenses of their education are children of parents from the counties of Scotland above mentioned" (the Highlands).¹ Other classes, too, however, and not least the upper ranks of Greenock society, had their quotas of Highlanders. Many Highlanders, some of them from the landed families of Argyll, formed part of the elite of merchants, high Customs officials, lawyers and doctors who made up the leaders of the community.²

1. Stat. Acc., Vol. 5, p. 572.

2. See Tables 10-14 and pp. 113-21.

Some of the most interesting sources for identifying the members of the upper ranks of society in Greenock in this period are the Assessed Taxes Schedules for the Window Tax raised yearly in the second half of the eighteenth century.¹ These Schedules list the properties (and their owners) having a certain number of rooms with windows, and they therefore give some indication of the relative size of houses belonging to particular individuals. From about 1750 this source would suggest that considerable numbers of Highlanders were moving into the upper ranks of Greenock society. In 1772, for instance, Baillie John Campbell (of Ashfield) is listed as owning one of the large properties in the town at this time - a house having thirteen rooms with windows.² By 1790 there were increasing numbers of Highlanders appearing on the lists, among them George Robertson from Bute, Colin Lalant, Schoolmaster, Mrs. Campbell, Shirvan, William Campbell, writer, son of John Campbell of Ashfield, Patrick Campbell (of Ruddill), writer, Duncan Campbell of Glendaruel, and Duncan Campbell of Auchlian. Several like Duncan Campbell of Glendaruel (a house with 16 rooms with windows) and George Robertson (a house with 18 rooms with windows) possessed some of the larger properties in the town at this time.³

1. Reg. No., Assessed Taxes Schedules, Window Tax, E 326/1.

2. Ibid., E 326/1/104.

3. Ibid., E 326/1/107.

A statistical analysis of the surnames appearing in the Schedules for the Window Tax, moreover, suggests convincingly that substantial numbers of highland migrants were to be found in the middle and upper ranks of society in Greenock in the second half of the eighteenth century. Table 42 shows the percentages of Highland surnames appearing in the Schedules in each of the years 1753, 1770 and 1790, and these may be compared with the percentages of Highland names in the Greenock marriage registers at the corresponding dates. The figures for 1753 seem rather low, and few highland names appear on the Schedules, but for 1770 and 1790 the percentages are close enough to the norms to warrant a conclusion that the numbers of Highlanders represented in the middle and upper ranks of Greenock society were actually proportionate to their numbers in the total population. This conclusion receives some support from an analysis of the surnames in Tait's Directory,¹ the first Greenock Directory of 1783, and from an analysis of the Assessed Taxes Schedules for the Inhabited House Tax in 1790,² the results of which are also shown in Table 42. These sources refer to the same orders of society as do the Schedules for the Window Tax, for only

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1. John Tait's Directory for the City of Glasgow, Villages of Anderston, Calton and Gorbals; also for the Towns of Paisley, Greenock, Port Glasgow and Kilmarnock. From 15th May, 1783 to the 15th May, 1784 (Glasgow, 1783).
 2. Reg. Ho., Assessed Taxes Schedules, Inhabited House Tax, E 326/3/52.

people owning substantial houses were liable to the tax, and only those who were successful and prominent in the business and social life of the community had their names listed in the Directory. Once again the percentages of people having Highland surnames are close to the norm, and there seems little reason to doubt, therefore, that the middle and upper ranks in Greenock society contained many representatives from among the Highland migrants in the late eighteenth century.

Certain of the Highlanders who formed part of the upper orders of society in Greenock were of course from the landed families of the Highlands, and would thus be merely taking up a position in the town appropriate to their social status, but there is every reason to believe that some of the migrants had initially occupied less elevated ranks when they arrived in the town, and that they had risen relatively quickly to more prominent positions. The expanding economy of Greenock created a situation where there was considerable social mobility, and men who began in initially unimportant positions could quickly win success and elevation in society. There were indeed, moreover, several occupations which provided the ambitious migrant with ready avenues of advance. Some men like Robert McFie from Bate, for example, began as shopkeepers, but by dint of hard work and commercial acumen they expanded their businesses so successfully that within a short time they became merchants or even industrialists.¹ Others like

1. See Table 14 and pp. 84-5.

Alexander Campbell found the Customs service a ready avenue of advance from the position of Landwriter to that of Comptroller,¹ while some men were probably able to rise rapidly in the legal profession.² Another path of social and commercial advance was open to such tradesmen as coopers and curers, and even bakers. These men, starting off as ordinary tradesmen, could become masters after a few years, and if they were successful in their own businesses, they could then branch out into profitable lines as merchants. One interesting example of such a successful career is that of a certain Archibald Black who came to Greenock from Glendaruel about 1760. He worked as a baker and then as a merchant, and became a prominent and respected figure in the community. His son, John Black, became a leading cooper and merchant in Greenock in the early nineteenth century, and when he died in 1832 he left over £3,500 in moveable goods and cash, together with some houses and other property in the town.³

One activity which was particularly important in providing ambitious Highlanders with a means of advancing their position

1. See Table 13.

2. See p. 77 - George Williamson and Daniel Maclean.

3. H. McKechnie, The Lamont Clan, pp. 307, 341; Greenock Gaelic Parish Church, 'Trustees' Minutes, September 16, 1790; Tombstones, Old West Kirkyard, Greenock; Reg. No., S.C. Renfrewshire, Register of Inventories, Vol. 6, September 22, 1832, Folio 46.

in life in the eighteenth century was the buss fishings. Each year many Highland youths were taken on as landmen, cooks or boys, and after one season they were able to graduate to the position of seaman or coopers.¹ After serving for two or three seasons on the busses, many of the Highlanders would then seek and find employment "on board the merchant ships which trade from Port Glasgow, Greenock, Campbeltown etc., to America, the West Indies, as well as to Ireland and coastwise".² Some even obtained positions as officers, for "men having sailed on board of a Buss in the characters of fishers or coopers, are found deserving of the situation of a second mate or even of first mate in West Indiamen".³ Here clearly was a definite and well trodden avenue of advance open to Highlanders, for after several years as mate on a West Indiaman they might well obtain command of their own ship. Moreover, captains of ships at this time often engaged in trade in their own right, and it was not at all uncommon for them to become merchants ashore after several voyages.⁴ That this was the normal practice in eighteenth century Greenock is made clear by a statement of D. Loch, who observed in 1770 that "the greatest part of

1. Reports on British Herring Fisheries, P.P., Vol. X (First Series), p. 215.

2. Reports on British Fisheries, P.P., Vol. X (First Series), p. 141.

3. Reports on British Herring Fisheries, P.P., Vol. X, p. 215.

4. C. Gill, Merchants and Mariners of the Eighteenth Century (London, 1961).

the merchants at Greenock, Crawford's Dyke, and at this place (Gourock) have had a sea-education, most of them having been snip-masters".¹ Thus it was that the way was prepared for the advance of Highlanders from relatively lowly ranks to positions of prosperity and influence among the merchants of Greenock. It is to be remembered, moreover, that for many years throughout the second half of the eighteenth century Britain was engaged in war, and this fact, together with the expansion of the economy, brought about a tremendous increase in the number of ships sailing from Greenock and other ports, and thus in the number of opportunities for advancement open to Highland and other seamen at this time.

For assessing the social status of the Highland and other migrants in Greenock in the nineteenth century there is again much more reliable and comprehensive information available in the Census Enumeration Books after 1851. Clearly there would be a close correlation between a person's occupation and his social status, for the latter would be largely determined by the wages he earned and by his general affluence. Accordingly the various occupations in which men were employed in Greenock in 1851 and 1891 were arranged into Grades which would give some indication of their relative occupational status, and the results for the migrant groups in Greenock

1. D. Loch, Essays on the Trade, Commerce, Manufactures and Fisheries of Scotland, Vol. 1, p. 135.

and the local-born are shown in Tables 43 and 44. The Grades chosen are a modification of those used by several modern organisations which carry out social surveys. Grade A/B includes officers in the services and merchant marine, and men in executive, managerial and professional positions; Grade C1 those employed in clerical and commercial work; Grade C2 skilled workers and tradesmen; C3 self-employed shopkeepers and other self-employed workers; Grade D1 labourers and unskilled workers in factories etc.; and D2 shop assistants. In Grade C2 were placed all those workers such as shoemakers, tailors and other tradesmen who possessed some occupational skill, while D1 included labourers, street-cleaners and all other categories of unskilled or semi-skilled workers. To avoid a decision concerning the exact skills of seamen, a separate grade of Mariners for all seamen below officer rank was also included. Only those youths and men aged sixteen and over were included in the counts, for many boys would not perhaps begin their apprenticeship till this age. The Tables show the percentages of Highlanders (and the other migrants) in the various Grades, and also the norms for the total male working population over sixteen in these Grades.

An analysis of the figures for 1851 would suggest that the Highland migrants were somewhat over-represented as Mariners and in the D1 Grade of unskilled workers, that they were represented roughly in accordance with the norms in Grades C2 and C3, and that they were under-represented to a slight extent

in the A/B (Professional/Managerial), C1 (Clerical) and D2 (Shop Workers) Grades. In 1891, however, there was a change in the position, and the Highlanders were then slightly over-represented in the A/B Grade and slightly under-represented in the D1 Grade. Nevertheless, there were never any really serious or significant deviations from the norms, and, taken together, the results for the two years would indicate that the Highland migrants were spreading themselves throughout the various occupational Grades roughly in proportion to their numbers in the total male working population. If Mariners are considered semi-skilled workers, then there was perhaps a tendency for the Highlanders to be slightly over-represented in the D1 Grade of unskilled workers, but there were, on the other hand, a large number of them to be found in the A/B Grade of professional and managerial workers. Clearly it was still relatively easy for men from the Highlands to make their way into the middle and upper ranks of Greenock society.

The position of the Irish migrants in Greenock was not apparently quite as favourable as that of the Highlanders, for overwhelmingly the Irish workers were to be found in the less skilled occupations, some 61.2% of them in 1851 and 61.7% in 1891 appearing in the D1 and D2 Grades. Fairly large numbers of the Irish

workers, however, were able to find employment as skilled workers and to advance into the A/B Grade, and these findings confirm the statement made by J.A. Jackson that the Irish migrants in Britain "were by no means all unskilled labourers".¹ In all 3.0% of those employed in the A/B Grade in 1851 and 5.3% in 1891 had been born in Ireland,² and these figures are rather similar to the results obtained by Dr. Lawton when he discovered that 6.5% of all the merchants, bankers and business men in a sample area of Liverpool in 1851 were Irishmen.³ Nevertheless, the general pattern obtaining for the Irish migrants in Greenock in Tables 43 and 44 provide ample support for Jackson's conclusion that while many Irishmen "were able to rise in status after their arrival in Britain.....the majority....remained in unskilled jobs".⁴

The other migrant groups in Greenock, on the other hand, seem to have fared rather better than the Irish. Thus the migrants from England and Abroad, and from Renfrewshire and other parts of Lowland Scotland were rather more successful in

1. J.A. Jackson, The Irish in Britain, p. 84.

2. Calculations from the 1851 and 1891 Census Enumeration Books, Greenock, 433-44 and 564/1-2.

3. R. Lawton, 'The Irish Community in Liverpool in 1851', in Irish Geography, Vol. IV, No. 1, 1959.

4. Jackson, op. cit., p. 84.

obtaining posts and positions in the A/B Grade than were the Highland and Irish migrants. Rather interesting, too, is the high percentage of the migrants from Bute who held A/B positions, and it may well have been that the long and close associations between this area and Greenock gave men from Bute a decided advantage in obtaining better posts. Many local-born men also obtained posts in the A/B Grade, particularly in 1851, and in general they were more in evidence in such positions than were the Highland or Irish migrants. Of some interest, too, are the numbers of local-born men occupying clerical positions, some 5.4% of them in 1851 and 7.4% in 1891 securing positions in this Grade. This situation gives some support to the opinion expressed earlier that migrants tended to move into those positions in Greenock for which their experiences and the skills acquired in their home environment especially fitted them. Certainly there would be few opportunities for acquiring clerical skills in the Highlands or in the rural areas of Ireland at this time, and without doubt people born and living in a town like Greenock would be more likely to secure the relatively limited number of such posts available.

The method of calculating social status by reference to the occupations followed by the male citizens almost certainly produces results which accord with the real situation in nineteenth century Greenock, but it has a serious defect in that it takes no account of the poor and destitute, and of those without any form of employment. In any industrial town of

nineteenth century, many people would fall into these categories, but Greenock seems to have had particularly large numbers of widows and orphans among its population. "We have an immense number of poor widows....in a seaport town like this...and an immense number of children," declared one of the witnesses before the Commissioners inquiring into the Poor Law in Scotland in 1843.¹ "This is one of the most melancholy things about the town of Greenock," observed another witness. "In an investigation 15 years ago (c. 1828) it was found that no less than from 4½ to 5 householders out of every ten were widows."² Figures were also given in the Poor Law Inquiry (Scotland), 1844 of the number of widows and orphans in Greenock, and these show that they were proportionately more numerous there than in other towns and cities in Scotland. Thus 1 in every 154 persons in Greenock was a widow as compared with 1 in 286 in Edinburgh and 1 in 576 in the Abbey parish of Paisley; while 1 in 144 persons in Greenock was an orphan as compared with 1 in 174 in Edinburgh and 1 in 428 in the Abbey parish of Paisley.³ These large proportions of widows and orphans in Greenock are probably explained by the fact that the town was a seaport with large numbers of seamen, many of whom were lost at sea or deserted their wives.

1. Poor Law Inquiry (Scotland), 1844, P.P., 1844, Vol. XX, p. 537.

2. Ibid., p. 558.

3. Ibid., Vol. XXV, pp. 2f, 63f, 64f - calculations by the present researcher.

There is no comprehensive and conclusive evidence concerning the actual composition and places of origin of the poor and destitute in Greenock in the nineteenth century, but there is some reason to believe that many Highland migrants were to be found among them. A very considerable number of Highlanders, for instance, were employed in sea-faring trades and occupations, and thus many of their wives were probably widowed and left with young children to rear. Other scraps of evidence, moreover, point to the same conclusion that many of the poor in Greenock were Highlanders. In 1844, for example, Mr. Fairrie in a report to the local Hospital Subscribers declared that of 261 widows and 86 male paupers given relief, "the greatest number were born in the Highlands".¹ Again, in the Poor Law Inquiry (Scotland), 1844, Mr. John Denniston, a merchant and deacon in the Mid Parish, is quoted as replying to a question concerning the origins of the poor in his district that "a great many are Highlanders. An immense proportion of the poor in my district are widows and orphans, and a great many Highlanders."²

Several of the local witnesses before the Commissioners inquiring into the Poor Law in Scotland in 1843, moreover, suggested that many of the Highland and other poor had come to Greenock principally to obtain a residence and assistance

1. G.A., August 27, 1844.

2. P.P., 1844, Vol. XX, p. 546.

there. Greenock had imposed an assessment for the poor on its inhabitants in 1814,¹ and some local citizens were convinced that this attracted paupers from surrounding districts. Thus John Malcolm, Kirk Treasurer of the Mid Parish, declared that "there have been instances of families leaving the Highlands because they could not obtain a subsistence there, and coming into the town".² The Commissioners, however, rejected the view that people were coming from the Highlands or other areas to Greenock and other lowland towns specifically to qualify for poor relief,³ but nevertheless, the numbers of highlanders cited by various witnesses as receiving assistance in Greenock would perhaps suggest that the Highland migrants there were readier to accept poor relief than they were at home. This conclusion would be in accord with Newte's view that "the shame of begging is not so great when they (the highlanders) travel among a different and distant people as it would be in their own parishes", and that "the shame of begging.....is naturally blunted living, and being lost to the eye of their kindred and neighbours, in the magnitude of populous cities".⁴

1. N.S.A., Vol. VII, p. 482.

2. Poor Law Inquiry (Scotland), 1844, P.P. 1844, Vol. XX, p. 514.

3. Ibid., Vol. XX, p. xxxix.

4. T. Newte, Prospects and Observations on a Tour in England and Scotland (1791), pp. 338-9.

Nevertheless, although many Highlanders living in Greenock in the mid-nineteenth century were certainly in receipt of poor relief, it would be quite mistaken to assume that the majority of the poor in the town at this time had been born in the Highlands. Several of the local witnesses reported in the Poor Law Inquiry (Scotland), 1844 made references to the large numbers of Irish paupers, widows, orphans and destitute poor in the town, and some referred to the poor who had come to Greenock from other parts of Scotland.¹ These references, however, were not sufficiently numerous nor given in sufficient detail to suggest that the Highlanders did not in fact comprise a considerable number of the poor in Greenock. In the absence of complete statistical data and information, no percentages can be given for the various migrant groups, but almost certainly the Highland migrants were significantly over-represented in this category of the poor and destitute in the middle of the nineteenth century.

That the Highland migrants were represented in significant numbers among the poor in Greenock, and thus in the ranks of the lower orders of society to a greater extent than the Tables for Occupational Status (43 and 44) indicate is further suggested by an analysis of the type and size of houses occupied by members of the various migrant groups in the town

1. P.P., 1844. Vol. XX, pp. 494, 510.

in the later nineteenth century. In 1891 the census enumerators were required to list the number of rooms with windows in each house they visited, and Table 45 summarizes this information for Greenock. There the householders in the various groups in the town are classified according to whether they lived in houses with from 1-3 rooms, 4-5 rooms, 6-8 rooms, or 9 rooms and over. The percentages of the members of the various groups appearing in each category were also recorded, and these may be compared with the percentage of householders in the total population in each category.

The most important feature to emerge from a study of Table 45 is that the general patterns shown are remarkably similar to the results obtained for Occupational Status in Tables 43 and 44. Once again the Irish migrants seem to have fared rather worse than any of the other groups in the town with some 56.5% of the householders of Irish origin living in houses of from 1-3 rooms. The Highland householders were in a rather better position with only 39.2% of them living in houses of this category, but they were apparently not so well housed as the members of the other groups in the town. Nevertheless, the figures for the Highland migrants did not differ very significantly from the norm percentages, and the Highlanders in the town seem to have been spread throughout the different categories of houses roughly in proportion to their numbers in the general community.

If this evidence for housing is taken together with that for Occupational Status and with the literary evidence concerning the composition and origin of those receiving poor relief in Greenock in the mid-nineteenth century, then there seems little reason to doubt that the following description of the relative social status secured by the members of the various migrant groups and local-born in Greenock does not differ significantly from the actual situation in the town in the nineteenth century. In the upper group receiving the highest ratings for social status were the migrants from England and overseas, from Eute, and from the Lowlands of Scotland. A little below these was a second group consisting of the local-born and the migrants from Renfrewshire. Further down the scale were the Highland migrants, and then significantly beneath these again and at the foot of the scale were the migrants from Ireland. Clearly, therefore, the traditional view of the position of the Highland and Irish migrants was not entirely mistaken, but the Highlanders were certainly much closer in social status to the other groups, and particularly to the local-born, than the popular view would have suggested. Where the traditional view is even more misleading, however, is in its failure to indicate the number of Highland migrants, and indeed to a lesser extent of Irish migrants, who were to be found in the upper ranks, and in all ranks, of Greenock society

in the nineteenth century. The various migrant groups certainly had distinct ratings and patterns of social status, but equally important was the fact that members of all groups were present in substantial numbers in all the grades and ranks of local society.

The figures given in Tables 43 and 44 for Occupational Status refer to static positions as they existed in 1851 or in 1891, but clearly the real situation was a quite fluid one. Not all the Highlanders appearing in the A/B Grade, for instance, would have secured their posts on their arrival in the town, and many must have worked their way up to the higher positions from lower grades of occupation. Some indication of the extent of this social advance and mobility in operation amongst the town's population is given by the figures in Tables 46 and 47 where the Occupational Status of the youths and men born in Greenock to parents belonging to the various migrant and local-born groups in the town is shown. Only those youths and men having two parents from a particular migrant area were listed, for the problem of disentangling the relative importance of the different influences in "mixed marriages" proved too complicated. The results given, however, are by no means complete, for those youths and men who had married and left their parents' home appeared in the Enumeration Books as the heads of their own households and so could not be traced and identified. Since many of the youths living at

home with their parents would not have had the opportunity of moving into a higher grade of employment before they were married, moreover, it is therefore very probable that the element of social advance for certain groups has been underestimated. The average age of marriage for the various groups could also be an important factor, for if there were a tendency for the members of a particular group to marry at a later age, then some of those appearing in the Enumeration Books in their parents' households would have had a longer time in which to secure positions of higher occupational status.¹

Nevertheless, despite all these reservations, the results shown in Tables 46 and 47 do indicate quite clearly that the sons of Highland migrants were able to secure posts of significantly higher occupational status than their fathers. In both 1851 and 1891, for instance, the percentages of the sons of Highland migrants in the C2 Grade of skilled workers and tradesmen was significantly higher than the figures for their fathers, while, on the other hand, their percentages in the D1 Grade of labourers and unskilled workers was significantly lower. Within the unskilled grades, moreover, there was a tendency for the sons of Highland migrants to obtain posts more as shop assistants than as labourers or unskilled workers in industry. The sons of Highland migrants were also able to secure posts in

1. See pp. 282-6 and Table 57.

the C1 Grade of clerical and commercial occupations to a much greater extent than the original Highland migrants, and indeed in 1891 their percentage figure of 11.0% was considerably above the norm of 5.0% for the whole population in this Grade. In the Grade A/B there were no considerable differences between the percentages in either years for the sons of Highland migrants and their fathers, but if it had been possible to secure figures for all the sons of Highland migrants instead of only for those youths and men living at home with their parents, then these percentage figures would almost certainly have been higher.

In comparison with the other groups in Tables 46 and 47, too, the sons of the Highland migrants in Greenock appear to have performed reasonably well. The sons of the local-born still seem to have been able to secure clerical posts rather more easily than the other groups, but generally the sons of the Highlanders obtained posts that compared favourably with the sons of other migrants in the town. Perhaps rather more of them were engaged in D1 and D2 occupations than were the sons of migrants from Lowland Scotland, for example, but their percentages in the A/B Grade were in effect the equal of each of the other groups, and they were distinctly superior to the percentages for the sons of parents born in Renfrewshire or in Ireland.

The contrast between the experiences and occupational status of the sons of Highland migrants, on the one hand, and

those of the sons of the Irish migrants, on the other, is particularly startling, for the pattern of occupational status for the second generation Irish was surprisingly similar to that of their fathers. A slightly higher percentage of the sons of Irish migrants were indeed employed in the C2 Grade of skilled occupations, and a rather smaller percentage in the D1 Grade of labourers and unskilled workers, but the differences between the figures for them and for their fathers were not very large and provide no convincing evidence that the second generation Irish were moving into positions of significantly higher occupational status or social status than their fathers. It is true that the Irish male migrants had a low average age of marriage (at 24.18 years over 2½ years lower than that of the Highland migrants),¹ but even if their sons followed their example in this respect, it is doubtful if this factor would account for their failure shown in the Tables to secure a higher occupational status than their fathers. Thus the whole pattern of the scores for the Irish migrants and their sons is in accord with the view put forward by Mr. J.E. Tennent in 1860 when he compared certain migrant groups in England: "The Scotch or Welsh peasant, who finds his way to the manufacturing towns of England, from a labourer becomes

1. See Table 57.

in his turn an employer, a tradesman, a shopkeeper, a capitalist, a merchant, a magistrate or a mayor; but strange to say, as a general rule, in that humblest of all capacities in which the Irish immigrant lands on the quay at Liverpool or Glasgow...for the most part, he is contented to continue for the remainder of his life."¹ The experiences of the Irish migrants and their sons in Greenock also give some support to the conclusion of J.A. Jackson that "the majority (of Irish immigrants)...remained in unskilled jobs and to some extent established a tradition which is still followed by their grandchildren and great-grandchildren today" (1963).²

The means by which the Highland migrants and their sons advanced to occupations of higher status in Greenock in the nineteenth century differed somewhat from the avenues open to their predecessors in the eighteenth century. Some migrants were indeed able to begin as tradesmen and to develop their own small businesses, while others managed to expand their small shops into flourishing retail businesses, but by this time it was much more difficult for a migrant to become, for instance, a large merchant, shipowner or industrialist.³ More openings for social advance, however, were available

1. J.A. Tennent, 'Social Economy', in Transactions of the National Association for the Promotion of the Social Sciences, 1860, p. 136.

2. J.A. Jackson, The Irish in Britain, p. 84.

3. See pp. 357-8.

to Highlanders in the professions of teaching and the law. The expansion of the police force, moreover, created more opportunities for advancement, and several of the higher posts in 1851 and 1891 were occupied by men who had been born in the Highlands. Thus, for example, Walter McLellan from Islay, James McDonald from Croy in Inverness, Malcolm McPherson from Skye, and Alexander McKenzie from Dores in Inverness all held the rank of Inspector in the local force in 1891.¹

In the nineteenth century, as in the eighteenth century, however, one of the readiest and most frequented avenues of social advance for Highland migrants was the merchant marine. Many a Highland youth joined a ship's crew in Greenock, and thus began a career which brought him to the command of a ship and an accepted position in the town. One such Highlander was a certain John MacDougall, a native of Jura. In 1840 he entered the service of the Clyde Shipping Service as a fireman on board the tug Hercules based at Greenock. "A very steady sober man" and of "uniform good conduct and obliging disposition", he rose through the various grades and ranks to become Captain of the tug Flying Childers belonging to the same company. As his fortunes prospered, so he came to live in one of the better residences in the town, but unfortunately he was drowned in Belfast Lough in

1. 1891 Census Enumeration Books, Greenock, 564/1/14, p.26, 564/1/17, p. 21, 564/1/21, p. 16, 564/1/33, p. 1.

1865. His eldest son, Neil, was serving as a deckhand on the Flying Childers, and he also was drowned.¹ The lad, it seems, was preparing to follow the same paths of advance as his father, paths which would certainly have been smoothed and eased for him by his father's influence and position in the company.

It should perhaps be noted, however, that though undoubtedly the merchant marine and sea-faring activities provided a ready means of advance for ambitious Highlanders, there was a distinct tendency for many seamen to claim officer status on rather tenuous grounds. Large numbers of small craft sailed on the Clyde and in the waters of the West coast, and each of these would have its captain and 'officers'. The ultimate was reached in the gabarts, the small barges or lighters used for the conveyance of coal, manure etc. on the river, which carried a complement of two - "a master and a mate".² In an article in the Greenock Advertiser in 1835, a commentator observed that "it is a frequent source of amusement to those who come in contact with these 'captains' (of the gabarts), who are generally north countrymen, to witness the complacency with which they talk of their 'vesshel' as if she were some gallant ship, and of the cabin as if it were remarkable for comfort and splendour".²

1. G.A., August 22, 1865.

2. G.A., September 24, 1835

The article then went on to relate a story concerning a certain captain and his mate who were engaged in a bitter quarrel. It seems that the mate was dissatisfied with the conditions in the cabin, but his complaints served only to annoy the captain. "Oh hang you," he retorted, "if ye're no content in the cabin, ye can just gang to the forecastle among the men!" Needless to say, as the writer observed, "this silenced all further remonstrances". To a certain extent, therefore, the numbers of Highland migrants appearing in the A/B grade of occupations in the various tables are perhaps a little inflated, but nevertheless, the broad findings as to the social and occupational status of the Highland migrants in Greenock would be altered only marginally by this factor.

CHAPTER 7HOUSING, HEALTH AND CRIME

HOUSING AND HEALTH

As the figures in Table 45 would indicate, many of the Highland migrants in Greenock lived in rather cramped housing conditions in the late nineteenth century, and this indeed would be the fate of the majority of the migrants throughout the period 1750-1890. In the early eighteenth century, several large stone houses with slate roofs and pleasant gardens had been built in the town, but most of the population then lived in small thatched cottages or in crowded, two-storied gabled tenements.¹ The town covered a small area centred round the Mercat Cross, with the homes of all the citizens, rich and poor, being clustered close together.² Towards the end of the century, as the population rapidly increased, many houses and tenements were built on the private gardens, and the town became a warren of closes and lanes and crowded humanity.³

As conditions in the town centre became worse, the more

1. T.W. Hamilton, How Greenock Grew (1947), p. 13.

2. Ibid., p. 18.

3. Ibid., p. 16.

prosperous citizens began to build houses elsewhere. At first they constructed villas on streets formed on the periphery of the town, but later several were built further to the west between Greenock and Gourock.¹ In 1818, a surveyor, David Reid, prepared a plan for further developments,² and under it a whole 'New Town' or suburb was proposed to the West. Soon thereafter, streets were laid out, and the 'West End' of Greenock steadily took shape. Here was concentrated a middle and upper class community, clearly demarcated from the other sections of the population, and here the more prosperous citizens of Greenock could live the 'good life' of the Victorian Age. Some of the wealthiest citizens, moreover, went further afield to substantial mansions in Kilmacola and Langbank.³

Meanwhile the standards of housing in the older parts of the town, now inhabited mainly by the poorer classes, were rapidly deteriorating. "The population of Greenock has increased from 22,000 in 1821 to upwards of 59,000 in 1851," wrote a local official, Robert Blair, in 1857, "...and during that time very little has been done in the way of building new houses of a suitable description."⁴ Observers compared

1. Ibid., p. 22

2. Reg. Ho., Plan of the town of Greenock and its environs with the intended improvements; 1818. Surveyor: David Reid, R.H.F. 285.

3. The Third Statistical Account of Scotland, Vol. XI, p. 222.

4. R. Blair, The Dwellings of the Working Classes in Greenock, p. 2.

Greenock unfavourably with other towns and cities in Scotland:

"We have inspected the worst portions of the Canongate, Cowgate, and West Port of Edinburgh, streets erected many hundred years ago, and now, for the most part, inhabited by the poorer classes of the community," wrote a missionary serving in Greenock, "and have seen nothing to exceed the filthy, miserable dens of disease to be found in the comparatively modern town of Greenock."¹

The sanitary conditions, too, were appalling, for there was no proper drainage, and the sewage from the houses higher in the town ran downhill to make the ground in the lower parts most unwholesome. Many streets were without private or public water-closets, and refuse and sewage were dumped in great heaps and piles in the streets.²

Into the most insanitary areas of the town, moreover, were packed an astonishing number of people, the density of population in the Mid Parish in 1860 being 470 persons to the acre.³ Not

surprisingly, Greenock earned the reputation of being the unhealthiest town in Scotland. In his report for 1855

the Registrar-General observed that its death rate was 3.6 per cent of the population, while the figure for children

1. W. Gunn, Sketches of the Sanitary and Social Condition of Greenock (1865), p. 8.

2. Reports of the Poor Law Commissioners to the Secretary of State Inquiring into the sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain, P.P., Lords, 1842, Vol. XXVI, pp. 46-7.

3. Hamilton, op. cit., p. 26.

under five was as high as 15.22 per cent of the child population.¹ On both counts the figures for Greenock were the worst for any of the eight principal towns in Scotland,² as indeed were the death rates in Greenock from Epidemic Diseases,³ Small Pox,³ and Tubercular Diseases.⁴ There was some debate in the local newspaper concerning the accuracy of the population projections made by the Registrar-General from the figures in the Census Report of 1851,⁵ but nevertheless, few disputed the fact that the mortality rates in Greenock were among the worst in Scotland or the United Kingdom. In addition, Greenock also suffered severely from several cholera and typhus epidemics in the nineteenth century, the cholera outbreak of 1832 and the typhus epidemic of 1864 exacting particularly heavy tolls.⁶

So far as the Highland migrants in Greenock are concerned, there seems little reason to doubt that by and large their experiences in the spheres of housing and health

1. First Detailed Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages in Scotland (Edinburgh, 1861), p. xxxi.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. xxxiii.

4. Ibid., p. xl.

5. G.A., June 29, 1861, July 4, 1861.

6. G.A., March 6, 1832; Hamilton, op. cit., p. 26.

reflected those of the general community. A proportionately large number of them lived in smaller and poorer houses in the town in the late nineteenth century (Table 45), but there were also Highlanders living in very substantial dwelling places. Thus many of the Highland migrants were listed as owning large houses in Schedules for the Window Tax in the late eighteenth century,¹ while in the nineteenth century, a considerable number took up residence in large villas in the 'West End'. Among these were George Robertson from Bute,² and Duncan Alexander Campbell,³ both of whom gave their names to streets in this district of the town.⁴

In their choice of residential areas, however, the Highland migrants seem to have favoured particular parts of the town. In the eighteenth century, for instance, the Mid Parish, an area which contained a 'Highland Close', so called because many Highlanders dwelt there,⁵ had a significantly higher percentage of Highland surnames in its marriage registers than the Old Parish.⁶ This

1. See p. 155.

2. See p. 148.

3. See pp. 85-6.

4. C. Blair, Greenock Street Names, pp. 102-3, 110-12.

5. C.A., July 26, 1831.

6. Calculations from O.P.R., Marriage registers, Greenock Mid and Old Parishes, 564/1.3.

situation seemingly continued into the nineteenth century, for in 1844, Mr. John Denniston, a Deacon of the Mid Parish, declared that there were many Highlanders in the area of the parish for which he was responsible. "There was a peculiarity in my district," he explained. "It possessed a landlord for a long time, who was a Highlander..... He was an excellent man, and exceedingly inaulgent and kind, and attached to his countrymen; and that I believe to be the cause why so many Highlanders are in the district."¹

The tendency for the Highlanders to congregate in certain areas was further illustrated by an analysis of the 1851 Census Enumeration Books for Greenock. These Books were grouped together into 12 volumes representing different districts of the town, and in Table 48 are shown the percentages of Highland-born persons in the population listed in each of the volumes. Some districts had a population with over 13% of Highland-born inhabitants, while other areas had less than 9% of Highlanders in their population.

Nevertheless, there was at no time, either in the eighteenth or in the nineteenth century, any area in Greenock which was purely Highland or which could in any way be described as a Highland ghetto. In the eighteenth century marriage registers for the Old Parish, for instance, there were in fact large numbers of men and women with

1. Poor Law Inquiry (Scotland), 1844, P.P., 1844, Vol. XX, p. 546.

Highland surnames, even although the percentages were higher in the Mid Parish. Similarly in 1851, Highlanders were found living in every part of the town, despite the fact that there were significant groupings and clusterings here and there. It is possible that higher percentages of Highlanders might have been obtained for the populations of smaller areas or even of certain streets, but certainly the figures in Table 48 indicate that no one district in Greenock was inhabited exclusively or predominantly by Highlanders.

Distributed as they thus were throughout the various areas of Greenock, with only insignificant clusterings here and there, the Highland migrants would naturally be afflicted by all the terrible diseases that scourged the populations of Scottish towns, particularly in the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, there is some evidence to suggest that the experiences of the Highlanders in the field of health did not always correspond exactly to those of other groups in Greenock. The Highland migrants there, for instance, disliked intensely the idea of their being taken to the Infirmary. "So great is the prejudice which is entertained by a very large number of the middle and lower ranks of society," wrote Dr. Wallace, the town's first medical officer, "and more particularly the Western Highlanders, against the Infirmary, that it is with the greatest difficulty that they can be prevailed upon to leave their miserable

apodes, although assured by the conscientious attendant that it is only by such a change that they are likely to be restored to health.¹ Another characteristic of the Highland migrants apparently was their reluctance to be vaccinated against small pox, and thus many of them living in Greenock were not protected against this dreaded disease. Dr. Wallace in 1860 wrote of a savage small pox epidemic that had raged a few years earlier "among a certain class of the lower and middle workers, particularly Highland lads who at that time had flocked to the town in consequence of the briskness of trade".² He also quoted a house surgeon in the Infirmary as saying in 1859 that most of the small pox patients at that time "belong(ed) to the Highlands and have never been vaccinated".³

To study the incidence of small pox and other diseases amongst the Highland migrants in more detail, it was decided to analyse the Registers of Deaths for Greenock and Glasgow in 1855, the only source of this type which gives the place of birth of the persons dying. The numbers and percentages of those dying of Consumption, Typhus/Fever and Small Pox respectively who belonged to the major migrant groups in Greenock and in Glasgow were compiled, and the

1. J. Wallace, Observations on the Causes of the Great Mortality in Greenock (1860), p. 22.

2. Ibid., p. 24.

3. Ibid., p. 25.

results are shown in Tables 49 and 50. Only the migrant groups were included, since in both places the figures for the local-born were inflated by the large numbers of children under 5 who died at this period.

The results and percentages in Tables 49 and 50 would suggest that the Highland migrants in Greenock and in Glasgow were indeed vulnerable to small pox. The numbers dying in both places of this disease were relatively small (29 and 50), but in each case the percentage was significantly above the norm.¹ There was also a tendency for large numbers of Highlanders to contract typhus, but they were not any more liable than others to be stricken down with consumption. One would not wish to base any firm conclusions, so far as the incidence of typhus and consumption is concerned, on this slim evidence for only one year, but the relatively high percentages of deaths from small pox amongst the Highland migrants, together with the literary evidence, would certainly indicate that they succumbed to this disease in proportionately greater numbers than did other migrants in Greenock in the mid-nineteenth century.

It would appear, therefore, that the Highlanders in Greenock did have certain patterns of health, disease and mortality that were peculiar to themselves and which differed to a certain extent from the local-born and from the other

1. See footnotes, Tables 49 and 50.

migrant groups in the town. Nevertheless, it would be mistaken to exaggerate these differences and peculiarities. Thus there was a general fear of the Infirmary among the lower ranks of society,¹ while there was also a widespread belief in the town that "it was na' right to put a beast's disease in a human body".² Certainly there were distinctive aspects in the outlook and in the health experiences of the Highland migrants, but the similarities existing between the experiences of the Highlanders and the other groups in the community were very, very much more important. For a large number of its citizens, Highland and non-Highland alike, Greenock in the early and middle years of the nineteenth century was a place of disease, epidemics and early death.

CRIME

Even as the early industrial towns were places of filth, poor housing and disease, so, too, many observers saw them as breeding grounds of crime and moral degeneration.³ Greenock certainly was a typical industrial town in this respect in the nineteenth century, but local citizens frequently claimed that it had been law-abiding and well

1. Wallace, op. cit., p. 22.

2. Ibid., p. 24.

3. N.S.A., Vol. VII, pp. 429, 490.

behaved in the eighteenth century. In 1820, for example, a letter appeared in the Greenock Advertiser telling how in earlier times Greenock had required no regular force to maintain law and order, and lamenting the fact that with the increasing unrest of the post-war years the position had altered.¹ Lettice was also "told of the infrequency of riots and disturbances in their public streets" on his visit to Greenock in 1792.² The early records of the Baron Baillie's Court also seem to indicate a relatively law-abiding population in the eighteenth century.³

It is perhaps tempting to see this change from the seemingly peaceful years of the eighteenth century to the sudden and rapid rise in criminal activities in the nineteenth century as a proof that the Highland migrants were indeed law-abiding. Thus the more peaceful period in the eighteenth century might be associated with large-scale Highland migration into the town, and the more unsettled times blamed

1. G.A., April 10, 1820.

2. J. Lettice, Letters on a tour through various parts of Scotland in the year 1792, p. 121.

3. R.M. Smith, The History of Greenock, p. 308.

on the Irish migrants arriving in the town in the early nineteenth century. Some such feeling was perhaps behind the desire expressed by the magistrates in 1818 to prevent any further influx of Irish labourers into Greenock.¹

Such a conclusion, however, is hardly tenable, for a more thorough examination of the situation existing in Greenock in the eighteenth century quickly discloses the fact that the town was not quite so peaceful and law-abiding as some local apologists would have had it. Thus riots of sailors for higher wages were reported in 1768 and 1773,² while Lettice was of the opinion that the claims made by local citizens as to the law-abiding nature of the local populace were "hardly credible".³ As proof of his views, he told how he had seen half of the population gathered in "the square, and the streets opening into it, in order to behold the public whipping of seven or eight young pilferers".⁴ He concluded by observing that "notwithstanding the good order, which may commonly prevail, the number of these unfledged rogues, not to mention adepts, is somewhat formidable".⁵ More sophisticated criminal activities, too,

1. Greenock T.C.R., March 9, 21, 1818.

2. The Scots Magazine, Vol. 30 (December, 1768), p. 668; Vol. 35 (June, 1774), p. 331.

3. Lettice, op. cit., p. 122.

4. Ibid., p. 121.

5. Ibid.

were apparently practised by some of the citizens of Greenock in the eighteenth century. In 1784, for instance, two Greenock merchants, John MacIver and Archibald McCallum, were sentenced to banishment at the High Court of Admiralty in Edinburgh for the crime of deliberately sinking their ship, the Endeavour, to obtain insurance money.¹ From their names, and the names of their accomplices, the Captain, James Robertson, and the Mate, Neil McCallum, one can be reasonably certain that they were Highlanders or of Highland descent.

It seems probable, therefore, that the Highlanders who settled in Greenock in the eighteenth century were sometimes tempted to break the law, and that the town then witnessed a considerable volume of crime and criminal activities. Undoubtedly, however, the early nineteenth century did see a rapid rise in the incidence of crime, a rise brought about to a large extent by the increase in the population and by the industrialisation of the town. Clearly, moreover, some of the Irish migrants contributed to this increase in crime, but there was also a continuing volume of Highland migration in these years, and some observers felt that the Highland migrants in the Lowlands were equally guilty of committing lawless and violent actions in the early nineteenth century. Colonel Stewart of Garth, for example, a writer given to praising the Highlanders, declared that the records of the time showed "how

1. Reg. No., Records of the Admiralty Court, Criminal Records, Vol. 5, pp. 83-473, AC 16/5.

numerous the crimes committed by Highlanders, or, at least, persons with Highland names, and of Highland descent have become in cities".¹ In more recent times, the American writer Wallace Notestein has adopted the more extreme position of attributing the lawlessness of the working population in the towns to some kind of ancestral barbarism. He noted the contrast drawn by Hugh Miller between the peaceful behaviour of the Highland men in their home communities and their wild conduct in the bothies,² and then extended this contrast to the migrants from the country districts of Scotland settling in the towns and cities. "In the city," he declared, "they found themselves limited by no neighbourhood discipline, and all their wild instincts had opportunity. It is certain that the whole Clydeside district gained a reputation for wild and violent men. It may not have been merely slums and ill conditions that made them so. It may be that some of that old ferocity of their ancestors got its last fling when they moved to the city and away from the confinement of country opinion."³ According to this view, the old clan spirit somehow came to reassert itself in the industrial towns of Lowland Scotland to produce crime and lawlessness and uncivilised behaviour.

1. Colonel D. Stewart, Sketches of the Character, Manners and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland (1822), Vol. I, p. 252.

2. H. Miller, My Schools and Schoolmasters, pp. 192-3.

3. W. Notestein, The Scot in History (1946), p. 294.

For Greenock there are unfortunately no reliable statistics available to show whether the Highlanders there in the nineteenth century were indeed as "wild and violent" as Notestein suggested, or peaceful and law-abiding as their apologists would claim. For a few years in mid century, figures showing the places of birth of prisoners held in the Greenock Prison were published in the Greenock Advertiser, but these did not distinguish between those born in the Highlands, and those in other parts of Scotland. Thus, for example, of the prisoners confined in Greenock Prison in the year ending June 30, 1851, 26.19% were born in Greenock, 37.25% in the rest of Scotland, 30.63% in Ireland, 3.24% in England, and 2.71% abroad.¹ The percentage for the Rest of Scotland at 37.25% is considerably lower than the norm percentage for this region in the adult male population of the town in 1851 at 48.0% (i.e. Table 33: Highland, 16.7% + Bute, 1.6% + Renfrewshire, 8.3% + Lowlands, 21.4% = 48.0%), and this would perhaps indicate that the Highlanders and the other migrants from the various areas of Scotland were not committing crimes to any significant extent. The percentage of Irish prisoners, on the other hand, at 30.63% was considerably above the norm figure of 22.6% (Table 33), while the figures for England and abroad (5.95%, prisoners: norm, 3.9%) suggest that some of the sea-going fraternity

1. G.A., September 2, 1851.

were finding themselves in trouble in the town.

One should not perhaps place too much reliance on any crime statistics at this time, however, for often they were quite unsatisfactory. That the figures for Greenock in particular, moreover, were not very accurate is suggested by an article appearing in the Greenock Telegraph in 1925. The writer, an old townsman, was telling of his early days in Greenock, and among others he recalled a celebrated policeman, Lieutenant Dugald McPhedran, a native of Inveraray.¹ "Duggie," it seemed, "was very proud of his Highland descent, and if an offender claimed to have been born in any of the Highland shires, he immediately met with a direct negative clothed in lurid Gaelic. Particularly was this the case if Argyllshire was claimed, and Duggie's orders to the clerk to 'Put him down Belfast!' were peremptory. Very few offenders belonged to the Duke of Argyll's county, as far as the police records went, the only ones to appear being those arrested when Duggie was off duty."²

Failing proper and reliable statistical evidence, therefore, one can make only tentative conclusions as to the law-abiding nature of the Highlanders in Greenock. Probably they were equally as given to crime or alternatively to good conduct as were most of the other citizens in the town, and probably the comments about their criminal

1. 1891 Census Enumeration Book, Greenock, 564/1/27, p. 13.

2. Greenock Telegraph, June 8, 1925.

tendencies, or about their fine behaviour, all cancelled each other out. Highland criminals, on the one hand, and Highlanders of exceptional merit and sterling qualities, on the other, were certainly to be found amongst the citizens of Greenock, but in the absence of complete figures and statistics, one must assume that their conduct did not differ significantly from that of the general population.

CHAPTER 8

RELIGION AND EDUCATION

RELIGION

For many Highlanders settling in Greenock in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, one of the most important aspects of their experiences in the new community, as important indeed for many as their occupation and working life, must have been their church membership and public worship. In the eighteenth century, most of the Highlanders who moved to Greenock would appear to have been members or adherents of the Church of Scotland, for the early disruptions and schisms which affected Lowland areas had made little impression in those parts of Argyll and Dunbarton from which the majority of Highlanders settling in Greenock had come.¹ Naturally, therefore, many of the Highland migrants became members of the local parish churches, the Old Parish Kirk, or, after 1741, the Mid Parish Kirk. The Kirk Session Records with their frequent references to Highlanders in the town involved in discipline cases,² the names of the elders and session clerks, and the Marriage and Birth registers,

1. J. MacInnes, The Evangelical Movement in the Highlands of Scotland, p. 7; T. Newte, Prospects and Observations on a Tour in England and Scotland (1791), pp. 146-7.

2. See p. 45.

all provide conclusive evidence that large and increasing numbers of Highlanders were becoming members of these two churches throughout the eighteenth century. Highland migrants of the middle and upper ranks of society came to play a prominent part in church affairs, and such men as Patrick Campbell, writer, of Ruddill, and Baillie John Campbell of Ashfield served as elders or as committee members on special occasions.¹

Large numbers of the early Highland migrants in Greenock of the lower orders of society, however, spoke little English, and thus they must have found the ordinary services in the parish churches difficult to follow and to understand. As early as 1717, as we have seen, the Synod of Argyll showed its concern for those Highlanders who had settled in Greenock and who could speak little or no English.² The Synod's request to the local laird for some provision of religious services and ordinances in Gaelic, however, seems to have met with no response. Repeated requests to the magistrates of Glasgow eventually led to the appointment in 1723 by the Commission of the General Assembly of a certain Mr. J. McLaurin from Luss "to take charge of visiting and Catechising such Highlanders in Glasgow as do not understand the English

1. Reg. Ho., Paisley Presbytery Records, Minutes, Vol. 10, March 22, 1706, Vol. 11, March 22, 1730, CH 2/294/10,11.

2. See p. 55.

language",¹ but the records do not reveal any similar appointment in Greenock at this stage. Probably the Highlanders in Greenock were left for the time being to make the best of the facilities available to them in English in the parish churches.

Later in the eighteenth century, however, some informal provision of religious services for Gaelic speaking Highlanders seems to have been made in Greenock. Beginning about 1780, Mr. Blair, the assistant in the Mid Parish Church, began preaching to Highlanders in Gaelic on Sunday evenings, first in the Star Hotel, Broad Close, and then in the Mid Kirk itself.² This latter practice, however, met with some opposition from local citizens, and in October, 1783, several of the inhabitants and members of the Mid Parish sent a representation to the Town Council requesting "that the indulgence given to preach in the gaelic language in the new Church.....ought not to be permitted in same Church".³ The Council was sympathetic to this representation, but it decided to permit the preaching in Gaelic "in the aforesaid church until the first sabbath of May next..." so that "such of the inhabitants who attend these preachings may have time to accommodate themselves with a house of worship".⁴

1. Reg. Ho., Synod of Argyll Records, Minutes, Vol. 5, August 8, 1723, CH 2/557/5.

2. R.M. Smith, The History of Greenock, p. 256.

3. Greenock T.C.R., October 20, 1783.

4. Ibid.

The unsatisfactory nature of these provisional arrangements and the increasing reluctance displayed by Church members to the Highlanders using the Old Kirk on Sabbath evenings convinced many people in Greenock that the Gaelic speaking Highlanders should have their own church. Gaelic churches for Highland settlers had been founded in Edinburgh in 1768,¹ Glasgow in 1770,² and Perth in 1787,³ and now as the Highland population rose steadily and rapidly in Greenock, the need for a Gaelic church there became ever more evident. During the 1780s, therefore, subscriptions were raised for the construction of such a church, and in September, 1791, letters were sent from Dr. Adams of the Old Parish and from the elders of the Old Parish to the Presbytery of Paisley stating that "a Chappell....to be called the Gaelic Chapel....is just now being erected in the Old Parish.....for the edification of those who do not understand the English language".⁴ It was also proposed that there should be "alternate services in English and Gaelic every Sabbath".⁵ The Presbytery expressed its approval, and when

1. Scottish Ecclesiastical History, Vol. I, p. 30.

2. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 436.

3. Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 240.

4. Reg. Ho., Paisley Presbytery Records, Minutes, Vol. 12, September 14, 1791, CH 2/294/12.

5. Ibid.

the building was completed in 1792, it was recognised as a Chapel of Ease. The Reverend Mr. Kenneth Bayne, a native of Dingwall, was appointed the first minister with a salary of £60 per annum.¹

Most of the men who were primarily responsible for having the Gaelic Church erected and who formed its first Committee of Management were Highland migrants who had come to occupy important positions in Greenock. Among these were Roger Stewart from Arran, merchant and Baillie,² Duncan Campbell of Auchlian, merchant and Baillie,³ Walter Ritchie from Argyll, shipowner,⁴ Archibald Black from Glendaruel, merchant,⁵ and Robert Sinclair from West Tarbert, merchant.⁶ These men and others of their like became founder members and controlled the fortunes of the new church for some years after its erection.⁷

It is extremely doubtful, however, if all the Highlanders in Greenock, or all the new migrants who settled in the town after 1792, actually joined the Gaelic Church. There are no sources for estimating the percentage of Highlanders in the town who became associated with the new church, but in the nineteenth

1. Ibid. Vol. 12, December 5, 1792. CH 2/294/12; Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae, Vol. III, p. 200.
2. G. Williamson, Old Greenock (Second Series), p. 187.
3. See Table 10. 4. See p. 113. 5. See p. 158.
6. G. Williamson, Old Greenock (First Series), pp. 150-1; O.P.R., Marriage Registers, Greenock Mid Parish, 564/1, February 6, 1767.
7. Greenock Gaelic Parish Church, Trustees' Minutes, September 16, 1790. May 10, 1797.

century it is probable that the situation in Greenock was not so very different from that in Glasgow described by the Rev. Duncan McGregor of Hope St. Church in 1860.¹ According to his account, some Highlanders there became members of one or other of the four Gaelic churches that had been founded in the city by 1860; some joined the ordinary parish churches; and others tended to let their church membership lapse and were connected with no church whatsoever. The first group of those who belonged to the Gaelic churches was the smallest, for it was calculated that under 4,000 out of a total Highland population in the city in 1860 of about 50,000 had joined these churches, although a larger number would attend for Communion services and on special occasions. Considerably larger was the second group made up of those Highlanders who had joined the ordinary parish churches, for where the husband, or the wife, or the children had no Gaelic, then it was almost "indispensable for the family to separate from a Gaelic church and join an English one".² But to the dismay of the writer, it appeared that the third group of non-church goers was the largest of all. He contrasted the Highlanders in their own country, who had been reasonably devout and good church goers, with "the Highlanders of Glasgow (who) are certainly in danger of losing their ancestral reputation, if they have not lost it already", and asserted that "a mass of Highland home heathenism

1. Rev. D. McGregor, The Necessity of Applying the Territorial System to the Gaelic Non-Church Goers of Glasgow (1860).

2. Ibid., p. 2.

is being consolidated alongside of our Lowland and Irish home heathenism".¹ The same alarming position seems to have been evident in Edinburgh, for "two-thirds of the young men coming from the Highlands to Edinburgh.....join no church; if they go to the Gaelic Church, they do not settle - they wander from one church to another, till at last they go to no church - they fall into bad company - they sink into an early grave".²

In Greenock, too, large numbers of the Highland migrants seem to have abandoned their church membership in the nineteenth century. In 1835, for instance, it was reported by the local Highland Church and School Accommodation Society that from 700 to 1,000 of the adult Gaelic population were attending no church at all;³ while an article in the Greenock Advertiser in 1855 referred to "the neglected spiritual condition.... of the major portion of the Highlanders in Greenock".⁴ An equally serious situation was depicted in 1871 when the minister and session of the Gaelic Parish Church declared that they had been "long impressed with the difficulty or impossibility of maintaining in the minds of young Highlanders, both male and female, coming to Greenock, for employment, the habits of their youth in attending religious worship, and it has been very often found that persons who at home were regular church-goers have

1. Ibid., p. 3.

2. Ibid., p. 4.

3. G.A., March 2, 1835.

4. G.A., March 16, 1855.

here fallen into the practice of being only occasional worshippers where they have not abandoned the practice of their youth altogether".¹ They indicated that one of the causes of this trend was "the inability of young Highlanders to read the language they speak", and they proposed establishing classes to teach them reading and grammar "in the gaelic tongue". They also decided to make arrangements for the employment of a missionary and the opening of a mission hall "to get and keep hold of such persons coming to town to reside, and to encourage them to attend the ordinances of religion, and to keep company with individuals of good character".²

It seems clear, therefore, that the Established Church of Scotland was losing large numbers of adherents among the Highlanders who had moved to Greenock and other lowland towns and cities in the nineteenth century. The middle ranks of society probably retained their church connections, either in the Gaelic Church, or in the parish churches of the town, but the evidence seems conclusive that the working class Highland migrants to a very considerable extent abandoned their church membership. In this respect the Highlanders shared in the process whereby so many of the working classes of the industrial towns of lowland Scotland in the nineteenth century were to be alienated from an Established Church that

1. G.A., November 23, 1871.

2. Ibid.

had become very largely middle class in composition and outlook.¹

Although the great majority of Highlanders who arrived in Greenock at the end of the eighteenth century and in the early nineteenth century were almost certainly members of the Established Church, those who retained their church connections in the town seem to have quickly become supporters of the Evangelical party in the church. John MacInnes noted that although "Argyll became a stronghold of Moderatism" in the late eighteenth century, the "Gaelic Chapels of Greenock, and Glasgow" were "strong lowland outposts of Highland Evangelicalism".² At this time, many of the lay Evangelicals of South Argyll travelled to Greenock or Glasgow to attend services in churches more attuned to their way of thinking.³

As the clash between the Moderates and the Evangelicals became more intense during the 1830s, it became ever more clear that the members of the Gaelic Chapel in Greenock were increasingly favouring the Evangelical cause. The minister, the Rev. Mr. McBean, a native of Moy, Invernessshire,⁴ actively supported the Evangelical party, and since he was a very popular preacher, his attitudes and beliefs influenced many people in his own and in other congregations. He was said "to have had two congregations, a Gaelic and an English one".

1. Cf. A. Allan MacIaren, 'Presbyterianism and the working class in a mid-nineteenth century city', in S.H.R., Vol. 46 (1967), pp. 115-39.

2. MacInnes, op. cit., p. 153.

3. Ibid., p. 102.

4. Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae, Vol. 3, p. 200.

for large numbers of non-Gaelic speakers came to his English services.¹ As the crisis of 1843 approached, he "was much concerned as to the course his people would take, and for some time previous to the Disruption he instructed them as opportunity offered on the great principles for which the Church was contending".² Enthusiastic public meetings were held, and in March, 1843, he urged "the people to stand by those ministers (who were prepared to give up their livings) in the battle for truth".³ His appeals met with a ready response from his congregation, and resolutions "were unanimously adopted for giving hearty and vigorous support to their minister in the maintenance of their principles".⁴

When the Disruption actually occurred in May, 1843, the Rev. Mr. McBean left his charge, and he was followed by practically the entire congregation of the Gaelic Church.⁵ On the first Sunday after the General Assembly, they met in the Duncan Street Burial Ground, and then they worshipped in the disused Old West Kirk for the following twelve months until the Free Gaelic Church was erected and opened in September, 1844.⁶ So complete was the movement of the

1. A. J. Black, Disruption, Reminiscences Specially Connected with Rev. Mr. McBean of the Free Gaelic Church, Greenock. (Greenock, 1869), p. 4

2. Ibid., p. 5. 3. Ibid., p. 11. 4. Ibid., p. 12.

5. Rev. J. Ewen, Annals of the Disruption, p. 113.

6. Ibid., p. 203.

congregation to the new Free Gaelic Church that the Gaelic Church remained closed for ten years till 1853.¹ Its re-opening, moreover, was not caused by any return to the fold of members of the Free Gaelic congregation, but "by the increase of the Gaelic-speaking population" in Greenock as new migrants moved into the town from the Highlands.²

It was not only the Gaelic congregation in Greenock, however, which supported the ministers who left the Church of Scotland, for many of the other Established church congregations lost the majority of their members to the new Free Church congregations that were formed after 1843. In the Census of Great Britain, 1851: Religious Education and Worship, Scotland, Report and Tables, it was shown that there were 7 Free Church Congregations in Greenock to the 5 of the Established Church, and that the total attendances on the day the census was taken were 9174 in the Free Churches, and 4267 in the Established Churches.³ Clearly the majority of the Presbyterians in Greenock had favoured the Free Church, and it is reasonable to suppose that among the large sections of the various congregations who moved over to the Free Church, there must have been many Highland migrants. The 1851 Religious Census returns also showed that in all the Highland counties the Free Church had a

1. Reg. Ho., Greenock Presbytery Records, Minutes, Vol. 2, October 25, 1853. CH 2/517/2.

2. Black, op. cit., p. 17.

3. P.P., 1854, Vol. LIX, p. 27.

larger membership than the Established Church,¹ and this preference for the Free Church party was almost certainly shared by the majority of those Highlanders in Greenock who had been members of the Church of Scotland before 1843.

There were of course many other denominations in Greenock in the nineteenth century in addition to the Established Church and the Free Church, and without doubt some of the Highland migrants would join such congregations. A Catholic Church was founded in 1802, and, as we have seen, several Highlanders undoubtedly became members.² Highlanders, too, must have formed part of the small Episcopalian congregation, although the numbers here were rather smaller than might have been expected.³ Highlanders also seem to have joined some of the Relief Churches and later the United Presbyterian Churches that were formed in Greenock. The records of Sir Michael Street Relief (later United Presbyterian) Church, founded in 1806, for instance, reveal the presence of several members with Highland names among the office bearers. Thus in 1807 there was a Duncan Campbell, a Malcolm McGregor, a Daniel McKenzie, a James McQuibby, and a Charles Campbell, while the President of the Congregation in 1806 was Archibald

1. P.P., Vol. LIX, pp. 7-20.

2. See pp. 96-7.

3. See pp. 96-7.

Macmill,¹ a native of Campbeltown.² Nevertheless, even the briefest scrutiny of the names that appear in the surviving records of this and other similar presbyterian congregations would suggest very strongly that the majority of the members were lowlanders, and that only a sprinkling of Highlanders did in fact join them, at least in the first half of the nineteenth century. The same position was also very probably true of the Baptist and Congregational Churches formed in Greenock in the early nineteenth century. One of the early ministers of the George Square Congregational Church was indeed a certain Alexander Campbell, the son of a minister from Oban,³ but once again the majority of the names of the office bearers in this church were overwhelmingly Lowland in origin.⁴ These conclusions concerning the extent to which the Highland migrants became members of the various presbyterian and dissenting churches must, of course, be rather tentative, since the evidence on which they are based is not substantial, but in the absence of full membership rolls giving places of birth it is reasonable to suppose that the general picture

1. Sir Michael Street United Free Church Centenary Memorial, 1806-1906 (Greenock, 1907), pp. 19-20.

2. 1851 Census, Enumeration Book, Greenock, 443, No. 113, p.16.

3. Select remains of the Late Rev. Alexander Campbell (Glasgow, 1845); W.M. Brownlie, George Square Congregational Church, Greenock - A History (Greenock, 1955), p. 107.

4. Brownlie, op. cit.

described is not so very far removed from the real situation.

One of the particularly interesting aspects of the religious experiences of the Highland migrants in Greenock is the manner in which they seem to have adopted the prevailing religious attitudes and prejudices in the town. They seemingly shared, for instance, in the violent anti-Catholic prejudices which existed in Greenock in the nineteenth century.¹ Much of the religious bitterness, of course, was brought about by the presence in Greenock of large numbers of Irish Catholics and Ulster Protestants, but there is evidence to suggest that the Highlanders in the town quickly acquired the local prejudices, or found that their existing prejudices fitted into the local pattern. In 1855, for example, there were anti-Catholic riots in the town, with attacks being made on the Catholic Chapel and on the residence of the Priests, and clearly many Highland youths were involved. Six young men with significantly Highland names were arrested; four of them named Robert McEwan (20), Neil McNeill (18), Hugh McColl (17) and Hector McLean (19) were carpenters, the fifth named Malcolm Morrison was an apprentice cooper, while the sixth, Lachlan Cameron (19), was a boatsman.² In court it was stated that McNeill could speak no English and required a Gaelic interpreter, and it is

1. For a petition against the employing of Catholics in the local police force, see Greenock T.C.R., August 5, 1851.

2. G.A., April 10, 1855.

interesting to note that all the youths were following occupations that were traditional preserves of Highland migrants in Greenock.¹ Further evidence that many other Highland youths were active in the riots was supplied a few weeks later by the minister of the Gaelic Church, the Rev. Mr. MacFarlane, who in a sermon referred to "the late disturbances in the town", and warned the young people in his congregation "of the dangers to which they, being simple and unacquainted with the habits of towns, are exposed through the influence of bad companions, by whose means too many were concerned in the riots".²

It would appear, therefore, that though the religious experiences of the Highland migrants in Greenock had certain distinctive features, in many respects they did not differ from those of large sections of the town's population. They did indeed establish Gaelic Churches where they could worship in their own language, but by no means all of the Highlanders who settled in Greenock became members of them. Many preferred to join the ordinary parish or other churches in the town, while a very large number of the lower classes abandoned their church membership altogether.

1. See Tables 26, 27, 35, 36 and pp. 111, 130-1.

2. G.A., April 24, 1855.

EDUCATION

In the sphere of education, too, the great majority of the Highland migrants in Greenock and their children seem very largely to have shared the experiences that were common to the children of all migrants and the natives of the town. In the eighteenth century, for instance, there do not appear to have been any special provisions made for the children of Highland settlers in Greenock, and certainly there was nothing to compare with the facilities that were made available for the children of Highlanders in Glasgow by the Highland Society founded there in 1734.¹ Highland migrants in Greenock, therefore, who wished to educate their children, would send them to the Grammar School (founded 1727), the burgh English or Mathematical Schools, or to one or other of the private institutions that were opened during the eighteenth century.² It is indeed more than probable that such Highland schoolmasters as John Woodrow and Colin Lamont³ would take a special interest in boys from the Highlands, but this could only have occurred on a personal and informal basis. After 1792 and the founding of the Gaelic Chapel, moreover, there might have been classes for boys connected with the Church, but no record of such activities exists for the early years.

1. The Scots Magazine, Vol. 21 (November, 1759), p. 609.

2. R.M. Smith, The History of Greenock, pp. 278-80.

3. See pp. 72, 73.

Dependent as they were on the ordinary burgh and private schools in the town, the Highlanders in Greenock in the eighteenth century were certainly not provided with an abundance of educational opportunities. The children of the more prosperous migrants would obtain a reasonably sound education in these schools, but there were too few places to provide for all the children in the town, and the fees were more than the poorer inhabitants could afford. Towards the end of the century, however, some attempts were made to provide greater opportunities for poorer children with the founding of a Female School of Industry, and a Charity School where education would be free to children who were orphaned or fatherless.¹ In the early nineteenth century, other institutions such as the Bechole Academy, the Trades' School and the Sailors' School were also founded to cater for the needs of the growing population of the town.² Another important development was the incorporation of the burgh grammar and parochial schools into the Greenock Academy, opened in 1855.³

Nevertheless, despite the increase in the number of schools in Greenock in the first half of the nineteenth century, this increase did not keep pace with the rise in the numbers of

1. Smith, op. cit., p. 265.

2. Ibid., pp. 281-3.

3. G.A., August 16, 1855; Greenock Academy (Greenock, 1855) pp. 7-9.

children in the town's population. In 1847, a committee was set up by the town council to study "the whole subject of education locally", and its report lamented a serious decline in the proportions of children enrolled in the town's schools. In 1826, one-ninth of the population had attended school, in 1834 one-eleventh, while in 1847 the proportion had fallen to one-thirteenth.¹ For did this report bring any immediate improvement, for in 1850, Dr. James Wallace declared that it was "a notorious fact that the same time a lamentable fact that comparatively few children of the lower orders are ever sent to school".² As late as 1873, when the newly elected School Board took office, 2871 out of a total of 9939 children between 5 and 13 were not attending school, but thereafter there was a rapid and steady improvement in the situation.³

Many of the Highland emigrants arriving in Greenock would have already completed any education or schooling they were likely to receive, and their attainments would depend on whatever facilities had been available in their home areas. Some very general view of their relative educational standards is perhaps to be obtained from information given in the local Registers of Marriages for 1855. The entries in

1. Greenock T.C.R., August 3, 1847.

2. J. Wallace, Observations on the Causes of the Great Mortality in Greenock (1860), p. 28.

3. Smith, op. cit., p. 229.

that year indicated the place of birth of those marrying, and Table 51 gives the percentages of the members of the various migrant groups in Greenock and of the local-born who signed with a mark. The results indicate that the percentage of Highlanders unable to write their names was roughly equal to that of the local-born or that of the migrants from Renfrewshire. Only a relatively small number of the migrants from Lowland Scotland were unable to write their name, but considerably more than 50% of the settlers from Ireland seemingly lacked this ability. Certainly one would not wish to base any firm conclusions on the evidence about the ability to sign a marriage register in one year only, but nevertheless, the evidence does suggest that the Highland migrants arriving in Greenock were probably on a well grounded in the population as most other groups in the community.

As far as those Highlanders and their children who received their education in Greenock are concerned, there are unfortunately no comprehensive statistics to indicate to what extent they did or did not take advantage of the limited educational facilities available in the town in the early nineteenth century. It is all too probable, however, that many of the children of the poorer Highlanders, like the children of the poor in the general population, failed to attend school at all. That this was the actual position is suggested by the formation of a Highlanders' Church and

School Accommodation Society in 1834 by wealthy Highlanders in the town to provide education for the children of poor Highland parents.¹ The Society carried out a census the following year (1835), and discovered that there were from 300 to 500 children of Highland parents who were not attending school.² The Association then determined to establish a school in the town for the children of Highlanders, and after £600 had been subscribed and a grant of £600 had been received from the government, a school to be known as the Highlanders' Academy was opened in 1835.³

The opening of the Highlanders' Academy in Greenock in a sense reflected the same impulse to create Highland institutions as had resulted in the erection of a Gaelic Chapel in 1792. The Highlanders' Academy, however, soon lost its specifically Highland character, and almost immediately it was thrown open to all children in the neighbourhood.⁴ Highland children did of course attend it, but its stated object came to be that of giving "a good English and Commercial Education to the children of respectable tradesmen at a moderate

1. The Post-Office Greenock Directory for 1851-52 (Greenock, 1851), Appendix, p. 32.

2. G.A., March 2, 1835.

3. Smith, op. cit., p. 283.

4. N.S.A., Vol. VII, p. 465.

charge".¹ In this respect the situation of the Highlanders in Greenock differed somewhat from that of the Highland migrants in Glasgow, for there the Highland Society in the nineteenth century continued to provide education for the children of Highlanders in the city.²

With the Highlanders' Academy becoming very rapidly an ordinary school for the general population of the town, it was left to the Gaelic Church in Greenock to make special provisions for the children of Highlanders in the mid-nineteenth century. After the Gaelic Church was re-opened in 1853, the minister, the Rev. Mr. MacFarlane, a native of Tiree,³ displayed a particular interest in education. A library was opened, classes were held for young people, and a church school with one certificated teacher and two pupil teachers or assistants was opened. There was also a night school which was attended by large numbers of young people of both sexes.⁴ Nevertheless, there was no intention on the part of the minister and elders of the Gaelic Church to provide a type of education which would set the children of the Highlanders apart from other children in the community. Indeed they had the opposite intention, and hoped that the

1. The Post-Office Greenock Directory for 1860-61 (Greenock, 1860- Appendix, p. 75.

2. Poor Law Inquiry (Scotland), 1844, P.P., 1844. Vol. XX, p. 649.

3. Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae, Vol. 3, p. 200, Vol. 4, pp. 87-8.

4. G.A., April 23, 1859.

instruction in Gaelic which they were providing would be necessary for only a short transitional period and that the children would then be able to undertake a conventional education in English.¹

The activities of the Rev. Mr. MacFarlane and his colleagues, and also of the members of the Highland Church and School Accommodation Society, indicate that there were many Highlanders in Greenock who valued education very highly. Other prominent citizens of Highland origin also took an active part in improving the educational facilities available, both for Highland children and for the children of Greenock in general. In 1820, for instance, a Greenock Gaelic School Society was founded, a branch of the National Society formed to provide schools for children in various parts of the Highlands.² In the 1820s also, several gentlemen in Greenock founded and supported a Lochgoilhead Education Society which maintained a school at Lochgoilhead, an area with which most of the members were connected.³ Certain individuals of Highland descent, moreover, played important parts in education in Greenock. Closely connected with the Charity School in the 1860s, for example, was A.J. Black,

1. G.A., April 25, 1854.

2. The Post-Office Greenock Directory for 1851-52, Appendix, p. 32.

3. G.A., January 30, 1820, January 26, 1830, November 1, 1832.

a prominent shipowner and the grandson of Archibald Black from Glendaruel.¹ His father, John Black, merchant and farmer, had been the Secretary of the Lochgilblhead Education Society.² Again, one of the prime movers in the foundation of Greenock Academy in 1855 was Duncan Alexander Campbell,³ and in the new Academy a 'Campbell' prize was instituted in 1863.⁴

This interest in education was undoubtedly shared by many of the ordinary Highlanders in the town. Highland names appeared with relative frequency in the prize lists of the various schools, and later of the Academy, while the very considerable rise in occupational status secured by the second generation Highlanders illustrated in Tables 46 and 47 was probably due in part to Highland parents encouraging their children to persevere with their schooling in order to secure professional posts. The lists of matriculated students at Glasgow University, moreover, show that a number of the sons of the Highland settlers in Greenock were

1. A.J. Black, The Charity School, Greenock (Greenock, 1866); H. McKechnie, The Lament Clan, p. 307; G.A., June 28, 1880; The Greenock Telegraph, May 12, 1915; Fanti Ecclesiae Noticiae, Vol. 3, p. 357; Tombstone, Old West Kirkyard, Greenock; Tombstone, Greenock Cemetery; see p. 158.

2. G.A., November 1, 1832.

3. Greenock T.C.R., July 13, 1854; see pp. 85-6.

4. Greenock T.C.R., July 1, 1862.

making their way to the Universities. These included John Wright, the son of a migrant from Kilfinan, who became an Advocate and lecturer in Scots Law,¹ and also Mungo Nutter Campbell, the son of Alexander Campbell from Kilmorich, who became Lord Provost of Glasgow in 1824-25.² One of the most successful of the University students was Alexander Darroch, born in Greenock in 1862, the son of a storekeeper from Jura, who rose to become Professor of Education in Edinburgh University.³

Education, therefore, was quite clearly a matter of concern to many of the Highlanders in Greenock. There is no statistical evidence to show whether or not a greater percentage of Highland children in the town attended school than did the children of other groups, but certainly many of them took full advantage of the educational facilities available. The prominent Highlanders in the town did not establish a separate system of schools for Highland children, but they certainly helped to provide the facilities and encouragement which enabled many children of ordinary Highland parents to advance successfully through the educational system of the time.

1. The Matriculation Albums of the University of Glasgow From 1728 to 1908, G.W. Innes Addison (Glasgow, 1913), no. 1924 (1759).

2. Ibid., No. 6072 (1799); see Table 13.

3. Register of Births, 1862, Greenock West Parish, 564/3, no. 69; Register of Deaths, 1924, Jura, 539/1, no. 5; Greenock Telegraph, September 23, 1924.

CHAPTER 9

PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL AFFAIRS

POLITICS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In the same way that the Highland settlers in Greenock in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were prominent in the religious and educational life of the town, so, too, they played an active part in local and municipal affairs, and in a wide range of local activities. Once again it is impossible to compile a realistic statistical count of the numbers of Highlanders engaged in local affairs and politics, but certainly Highland migrants appeared frequently in important positions over the years. In the eighteenth century, for example, there were several Highlanders elected to the local town council, among them being John Campbell of Ashfield,¹ Duncan Campbell of Auchlian (Baillie and Treasurer),² Roger Stewart from Arran (Baillie),³ George Robertson from Bute (Baillie),⁴ Walter Ritchie from Argyll.⁵

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1. Greenock T.C.R., September 14, 1767; see Table 11.
 2. Greenock T.C.R., September 8, 1788; see Table 10.
 3. Greenock T.C.R., September 10, 1787; see p. 200.
 4. Greenock T.C.R., September 26, 1798; see p. 148.
 5. Greenock T.C.R., September 8, 1788; see p. 113.

and several others. The tradition of Highland migrants or their descendants serving on the council was continued in the nineteenth century, with James J. Grieve, a native of Perthshire and a Highlander, holding the office of Provost from 1846-9 and 1860-8,¹ William MacFie serving as Provost from 1835-7,² and Duncan Alexander Campbell serving as Treasurer in the 1840s.³ Highlanders were also appointed as council officials, and among the most prominent in this sphere were John Campbell of Ashfield and his son William, who occupied the post of Town Clerk from 1760 to 1807,⁴ and George Williamson from Kintyre, who acted as the Burgh Prosecutor in the early nineteenth century.⁵

Before 1832 Greenock had no separate Parliamentary representation,⁶ and only those men who were freeholders in the county would have a vote in the election of an M.P. for Renfrewshire.⁷ In the earlier part of the eighteenth century,

1. Greenock T.C.R., November 11, 1846; R.M. Smith, The History of Greenock, pp. 80, 382-3; G.A., December 6, 1859.
2. Greenock T.C.R., October 28, 1835, November 2, 1836; see Table 14.
3. Greenock T.C.R., November 11, 1846; see pp. 85-6.
4. Greenock T.C.R., May 9, 1816.
5. Greenock T.C.R., September 27, 1816.
6. W. Croft Dickinson and G. Donaldson, A Source Book of Scottish History, Vol. 3, pp. 493-4.
7. W. Ferguson, Scotland: 1689 to the Present, p. 134.

however, few citizens of Greenock were listed on the roll of freeholders, the main elements appearing there being landlords like Sir John Senaw of Greenock, Sir Michael Stewart of Blackhall, Colonel William McDowall of Castle Semple, William Cunningham of Craigenus, Sir Archibald Stewart of Castlemilk, and Alexander Porterfield of Fulwood.¹

In the 1750s and 1760s the names of some Glasgow merchants, and also influential personages and politicians of Highland origin such as Islay Campbell, Daniel Campbell of Shawfield, and James Campbell of Blythswood were added to the roll,² but it was not until the 1770s and 1780s that the names of several citizens of Greenock began to appear. Among these were a few Highland migrants like Patrick Campbell, writer (of Ruddill),³ Archibald Campbell, merchant (probably of Finlaystone),⁴ and Duncan Darroch of Gourrock (from Jura),⁵ but such instances were not at all common, and it is very doubtful if the Highland migrants who settled in Greenock played any very important part in county politics and in the

1. Reg. Ho., S.C. Renfrewshire, Freeholders' Records, Vol. 1747-1815, Michaelmas Court, 1745.

2. Ibid, Vol. 1765-85, pp. 7-8 (1765).

3. Ibid, Vol. 1787-1809, pp. 148-50, 154 (1795); see Table 10.

4. Ibid, Vol. 1807-1809, pp. 260-71 (1805); see Table 12.

5. Ibid, Vol. 1787-1809, pp. 148-50, 154 (1797); D. Budge, Jura (1960), p. 163.

county elections for the unreformed Parliament. After the reform of Parliament and Greenock became a municipal and parliamentary burgh returning one M.P.,¹ however, the Highlanders in the town adopted a more prominent role. The first M.P. for Greenock was a local landowner, Robert Wallace of Kelly (1832-45),² but it was not long before Highlanders were also entering into this field. In 1868, Provost J.J. Grieve was elected M.P., and he served in that capacity till 1877.³ Grieve was an active and influential figure in local politics for many years, and he carried through several important projects.

In addition to taking an active part in the formal political struggles of the nineteenth century, Highlanders in Greenock were also prominent in those public meetings and protests concerned with the issues of the day that were such a feature of the period. In March, 1840, for instance, a resolution against the Corn Laws passed at a public meeting was seconded by a certain A. MacCallum who described himself as "A Highlandman";⁴ while in December, 1845, a group of men of Highland origin or descent, including Provost J.J. Grieve,

1. See pp. 13-14.

2. J. Donald, Past Parliamentary Elections in Greenock (1933), pp. 11-26.

3. Ibid., pp. 33-4; R.M. Smith, The History of Greenock, pp. 382-3; see p. 221.

4. G.A., March 3, 1840.

Robert MacFie and Duncan Alexander Campbell were active in organising a petition to the council calling for a meeting to request the opening of British ports to the admission of grain and other articles of food.¹ Clearly the Highlanders were intensely interested in this and the other political questions of the period, and they were more than eager to become involved.

Although one can be fairly certain, therefore, that many Highlanders in Greenock did play an active part in local affairs and politics, it is rather more difficult to detect any political bias or preferences they might have had. In the eighteenth century there do not appear to have been any truly political groupings among the Greenock councillors, the various alliances being dictated more by interest and family connections. John Campbell of Ashfield and his son, for example, were linked to many of the local families with political influence, and many of their friends and connections were members of the council.² This situation continued till about the end of the eighteenth century, but the dismissal of William Campbell from the post of Town Clerk in 1807 suggests that the age of family influence in local politics was waning.

Be that as it may, the early years of the nineteenth century did in fact see the beginnings of a form of party

1. G.A., December 5, 1845.

2. Greenock T.C.R., August 3, 1804.

political strife in the local affairs of Greenock.

Beginning about 1810 with a dispute over a local Parliamentary Bill, for among other things, establishing an academy in the town, rival parties emerged, and during the following years there was bitter and fierce political strife. The two parties became known as the Reds and the Blues, and in the 1820s political passions reached boiling point over the question of the papers and periodicals to be displayed in the Town Reading Room. The proprietors favoured the Red Party, and when they prevented certain of the more 'radical' newspapers (including The Scotsman) from being displayed, many subscribers resigned and formed a Coffee Room, which became the centre of the Blue party.¹ John Galt satirised this dispute in The Ayrshire Legatees, but there he made the point at issue the question of where the seats and chairs in an Assembly Hall were to be placed.

After the Reform Bill and the broadening of the franchise, local politics in Greenock was still frequently concerned with local affairs such as the extension of the harbours and the question of municipal finance, and the groups that were formed often cut across normal party lines.² In parliamentary elections, however, the Whigs and later the Liberals soon established a clear dominance in the town, even as they did in

1. D. Campbell, Historical Sketches of the Town and Harbours of Greenock, Vol. II, pp. 5-23; Smith, op. cit., pp. 36-7.

2. Campbell, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 137-49, Part II, pp. 83-186.

many other constituencies in Scotland in the nineteenth century.¹ Whig and Liberal candidates were returned with monotonous regularity, and in 1878, although there were two Liberal candidates as well as a Radical, the Liberals nevertheless managed to defeat the Conservative candidate. For a period from 1886 to 1906, however, the Unionist candidates were returned in the constituency, the Irish Home Rule issue having split the solid Liberal front in the town.² But after 1906 the Liberals re-captured Greenock, and thereafter they held the seat until it was gained by the Labour Party in 1936.³ The Liberal tradition saw some revival in the 1950s and 1960s leading to the election of a Liberal town council.⁴

As far as the Highland migrants and their descendants are concerned, they seem to have conformed to the general pattern of politics in the town. In the period after 1832, for example, those individuals who could be identified appeared overwhelmingly amongst the Whig and Liberal groups. The most prominent individual was Provost Grieve who served as the Liberal M.P. for the burgh from 1868-77,⁵ but in the election of 1832, two men descended from migrants from Bute, George Robertson and William MacFie, were active as supporters

1. James G. Kellas, 'The Liberal Party in Scotland, 1876-1895', in S.H.R., Vol. 44 (1965), pp. 1-16.

2. Donald, op. cit., pp. 42-51.

3. The Third Statistical Account of Scotland, Vol. XI, p. 185.

4. The Scotsman, September 14, 1968.

5. See p. 223.

and nominators of the rival Whig candidates.¹ It is difficult, on the other hand, to discover any Highland migrants among the Tory and Conservative candidates and their supporters, and one is therefore tempted to assume that the Highlanders were very largely to be found in the Liberal ranks. After 1836, however, it is very probable that some numbers of the Highlanders in the town switched their support to the Unionists. The Unionists in Glasgow and the West of Scotland received very considerable support from working class members of the Orange Order,² and undoubtedly those of the working class Highland migrants in Greenock who were affected by the hostile local attitudes towards Catholics³ might well have swung behind the Unionist elements in the town.

If it is difficult to establish any comprehensive picture of the membership of the Liberal or Conservative parties in Greenock in the nineteenth century, it is well nigh impossible to determine the extent to which Highlanders in Greenock became involved in the more radical groups and parties of the period. Nevertheless, there are stray pieces of evidence to suggest that some Highlanders did in fact participate in the various radical movements. Thus at a meeting in 1817 demanding

1. G.A., December 20, 1832; Donald, op. cit., p. 16.

2. Derek W. Urwin, 'Conservative Party Organisation in Scotland', in S.H.R., Vol. 44 (1965), pp. 100-1.

3. See pp. 209-10.

reforms, there was a certain D. McParlane, shoemaker, listed as chairman and 'President'.¹ Later in the 1840s, one, Peter Campbell, a shoemaker, acted as chairman at several Chartist meetings.² Campbell also acted as chairman of the committee supporting a certain John McCrae who stood as a parliamentary candidate in 1845.³ There is, of course, no conclusive evidence that these persons were Highlanders, or indeed descendants of Highlanders, but collectively the references do perhaps indicate that Highlanders in Greenock might well have taken part in the radical movements of the nineteenth century.

One interesting and significant feature of the activities and experiences of the Highland migrants in the field of politics in Greenock is that there appear to have been no specifically Highland questions raised in local politics, and no specifically Highland party or pressure group ever emerged. From time to time in the nineteenth century, it is true, local politicians or the local newspapers refer to the Highland evictions, Highland depopulation, Highland destitution, and other Highland problems, but there is no evidence that these ever became acute election issues in Greenock. In 1884, a local branch of the Highland Association was indeed formed in

1. G.A., February 25, 1817.

2. G.A., October 3, October 6, 1843.

3. G.A., December 23, 1845.

Greenock "for the purpose of ameliorating the condition of the Highland crofters, and obtaining for them a better system of tenure",¹ but once again there is no evidence of this ever becoming a really live and important issue in local elections. In politics, therefore, the Highland migrants in Greenock did not develop their own specific viewpoints and parties, but instead they adopted and conformed to the patterns, parties and policies of the local community. Within the limits set by these they often played very important and influential parts, and they contributed a great deal to local political life and affairs.

TRADE UNIONS

Another sphere of activity where the Highlanders in Greenock appear to have participated fully is in the work of the local trade unions. The first trade union to be formed in the town was the Carran or Carters' Society founded in 1791,² and throughout the early part of the nineteenth century several other unions were established. The evidence as to the membership of the various societies is rather scrappy, however, for all that has survived are a few odd references in newspapers to the activities of a particular union, with

1. Greenock Telegraph, January 31, 1884.

2. Articles and Regulations of the Greenock Carran or Carters' Society (Greenock, 1815 - in Greenock Public Library); Smith, op. cit., p. 354.

occasionally the name of some official or other. Nevertheless, despite the lack of direct evidence, there is some reason for believing that the Highlanders working in Greenock did in fact join the local trade unions in considerable numbers. Thus, for instance, the trades and occupations in which unions were formed at an early date were those such as carter, carpenter, joiner and shoemaker in which Highlanders were particularly prominent. Since, moreover, no statements appear in any records to indicate that the Highlanders stood aloof and refused to join, then one can safely assume that the Highland workers in Greenock were ready to cooperate with their workmates in forming trade unions.

Although it is most probable, therefore, that the majority of Highland workers in Greenock were prepared to join a trade union if one were formed for their craft, there is again no direct evidence to indicate whether or not they were particularly militant or active in the movement. Nevertheless, there is sufficient information and data available to cast some doubt on the claim made by W. Marwick that "the passivity if not servility (of the Highlanders) often noted in regard to the Clearances was perhaps also in evidence in industrial disputes",¹ at least as far as the Highlanders in Greenock are concerned. Thus, for example, it would appear that the members of those trades and occupations in which the Highland workers were well

1. W.H. Marwick, Economic developments in Victorian Scotland, pp. 131-2.

represented frequently displayed very militant attitudes. In 1768 and again in 1773, for instance, the seamen in Greenock stopped work and demanded a rise in wages.¹ Then in the early nineteenth century the sawyers and shoemakers of Greenock earned a reputation for militancy and the unscrupulous use of the strike weapon. The sawyers were accused by the editor of the Greenock Advertiser in 1836 of being "foolish as well as wicked" in their frequent resort to stoppages,² while in the same year it was asserted "that in no town in Scotland have the master shoemakers been subjected to a tithe of the annoyance from their workmen that those in Greenock have had to submit to".³ It appeared that the Greenock shoemakers had developed the useful tactic of imposing effective 'blockades' on the town. When a blockade was in operation, "as many might depart as pleased, but no arrivals would be permitted; and so strictly is this ban enforced, that were even the good St. Crispin himself to attempt to take up his abode with us, he would be at once unceremoniously ordered about his business".⁴

It might, of course, be objected, that the militancy of the shoemakers and the sawyers in Greenock was provided not by

1. The Scots Magazine, Vol. 30 (December, 1768), p. 668; Vol. 35 (June, 1773), p. 331.

2. G.A., November 17, 1836.

3. G.A., December 5, 1836.

4. Ibid.

the Highland workers, but by the Irish, who were also very prominent in these occupations. There is indeed a commonly accepted view that the Irish workers in Scotland in the early nineteenth century were particularly militant and that they were especially active in the trade unions and in such radical movements as the Chartists.¹ This view, too, was held by several of the prominent citizens in Greenock at the time. Commenting on a strike of joiners in the town in 1833, for instance, the editor of the Greenock Advertiser remarked that "we doubt not that all these fellows were bellowers against the bill for suppressing disturbances in Ireland".² The Irish in Greenock, however, could hardly be blamed for the militancy of the carpenters, another group of workers frequently involved in disputes at this time, for by 1851 they were still providing only 6.1% of the labour force in this occupation. The Highlanders with 36.3% of the men working as carpenters in Greenock in that year clearly dominated that trade, and almost certainly they must have played an important part in the activities of the carpenters' union. Probably the Highlanders also helped to devise certain of the union's rules which increased the carpenters' strength as against the employers. One of these sought to restrict the number of carpenters in the town by stating "that the entry-money for

1. L.C. Wright, Scottish Chartism, pp. 161 ff.

2. G.A., April 25, 1833.

strangers entering the society is three guineas, whereas to ship-carpenters bred in the place, it is only half a guinea".¹ Since, moreover, "none of the union men will work in the same yard with men not belonging to the society", the carpenters were in effect enforcing a 'closed shop', and so preventing the employers from evading the consequences of the rule concerning 'strangers'.² It is perhaps tempting to see in these rules and practices evidence of the clan loyalties of the Highlander, and though this might be rather fanciful, the fact that so many of the carpenters in Greenock came from the Highlands cannot but have helped them to form group loyalties.

Further evidence that the Highlanders in Greenock were not particularly docile workers is provided by the actions of the local policemen in 1853. In that year, "the whole of the police privates struck work" since they had "long been dissatisfied with the terms on which they have been employed". The Greenock Advertiser denounced this "unwarrantable and pernicious strike", but nevertheless, the men's action did win them an increase in wages.³ It would appear, therefore, that the Highlanders, who made up some 50% of the force, were rather more militant than they have sometimes been made

1. G.A., November 21, 1836.

2. Ibid.

3. G.A., September 30, 1853.

out to be.

TRADE ASSOCIATIONS

As with the trade unions, there is little direct evidence concerning the membership of the various trade associations formed in Greenock by the employers and master craftsmen. Early societies were founded in the eighteenth century, among them the Master Wrights (1731), the Ship Carpenters (1738), Gardeners (1742), Master Coopers (1744), Master Weavers and Master Tailors.¹ Since, however, there were many Highlanders active as ship carpenters in Greenock, and since men from Bute and the Highlands dominated the trade of cooper, it is probable that the Highland migrants were active in the work of these particular incorporations. In the nineteenth century, too, the Highlanders and men of Highland descent were active in the various employers' associations that were founded, not least the Chamber of Commerce instituted in 1813. Among the Presidents in the nineteenth century² were William MacFie (1824), James J. Grieve (1847), Robert MacFie (1851-52), and Walter Grieve (1872-3), a native of Strathfillan in Perthshire.³

1. The Post-Office Greenock Directory for 1851-52, Appendix, p. 54; Smith, op. cit., p. 50.

2. Commemorative Plaque in Greenock Watt Library.

3. 1851 Census Enumeration Books, Greenock, 444/119, p. 18.

THE VOLUNTEERS

Another aspect of the community life in Greenock in which the Highland migrants appear to have played an active part in the late eighteenth century, and in the second half of the nineteenth century was the Volunteer movement. Greenock was involved in the first phase of the movement during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, and a corps of Volunteer infantry, a corps of Sharpshooters, an Artillery Corps, a corps of Yeomanry, and Sea Fencibles were formed in the town.¹ Fortunately the names of the members of the various divisions of the Volunteer Corps in 1795 have been preserved,² and it appears that several of the officers were Highlanders or men with Highland names. These included Major Archibald Campbell (possibly Archibald Campbell of Askonel), William Campbell, son of John Campbell of Ashfield, Pollock Campbell, and Colin Campbell of Balliveolan in Lismore.³ It is probable, therefore, that the representatives of the Highland landed families in Greenock at this time were eager to join and support the new units. Perhaps the whole panoply and the parades of the Volunteers revived for them the old

1. Colonel W. Lamont, Volunteer Memories (Greenock, 1911), pp. 5-9; D. Wair, History of the Town of Greenock (1829), p.49; R.M. Smith, The History of Greenock, pp. 375-6.

2. Lamont, op. cit., p. 5; G. Williamson, Old Greenock (First Series), pp. 161, 306.

3. Reg. Ho., Campbell of Balliveolan Papers, GD/13/223.

glories and feelings of power and social prestige they and their ancestors had known in the Highlands.

In order to make some rough estimate of the numbers of ordinary Highlanders in the town joining the Volunteers at this time, a surname count was made of the members of the Volunteer Corps in 1795. From this it appeared that some 20.8% of the men had Highland names, a similar percentage had names placed in the Doubtful Category, while 58.4% had Non-Highland names. The percentage of Highland names at 20.8% is considerably lower than the norm percentage for men with Highland surnames in the Greenock Marriage Registers of 32.5% for this period, and thus it would seem that the ordinary Highlanders in Greenock were not particularly enthusiastic about joining the Volunteers. Possibly these low figures for the men with Highland surnames are explained by the fact that large numbers of the Highland migrants in Greenock had joined the naval forces or the merchant marine. Indeed, it is probable that they preferred service at sea, in the same way that the men of Argyll, according to Colonel Stewart of Garth, were "more inclined to the naval than the land services".¹ Colonel Stewart, however, made a clear distinction between the ordinary Highlanders of Argyll, and "the gentlemen of the county", most

1. Colonel David Stewart, Sketches of the Character, Manners and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland, Vol. II, p. 113.

of whom were eager to secure commissions in the army.¹ It would appear, therefore, that the Highlanders in Greenock conformed to the pattern of attitudes and preferences displayed by the men of Argyll, with the more prosperous migrants and the members of the Highland landed families in the town being eager to secure commissions in the Volunteers, and the ordinary Highlanders in Greenock almost certainly preferring naval and maritime service.

The next important phase in the Volunteer Movement occurred in the late 1850s, when the British public was so alarmed by the activities of Napoleon III that Volunteer Corps were formed in many towns and cities throughout the land. In Greenock, a Rifle Corps was founded in 1859,² but soon demands were being made in the town for the formation of a Highland Rifle Corps. A leader of the campaign was Collector Campbell of the Inland Revenue, a native of Breadalbane in Perthshire,³ and with the assistance of other Highland gentlemen in the town, including Provost J.J. Grieve, he worked tirelessly to gain support for his venture.⁴ In December, 1859, a public meeting was held under the chairmanship

1. Ibid.

2. Lamont, op. cit., p. 28.

3. Greenock Telegraph, July 23, 1875.

4. G.A., November 29, 1859.

of Provost Grieve, and among several resolutions passed was one declaring that "considering the great numbers of Highlanders resident in Greenock and the spirit of patriotism which has always distinguished them, it is the opinion of this meeting that measures should be at once adopted for the formation in Greenock of a Highland Corps of Volunteers".¹ Some discussion followed as to who should be eligible to join the proposed Corps, and certain interesting and revealing viewpoints were expressed. To a suggestion that membership should be confined exclusively to Highlanders, Collector Campbell declared that it should be open to all Scots, "for he maintained that all Scotchmen were Highlanders or the descendants of Highlanders (Cheers)".² Then to a further proposal that^t only Gaelic speakers should be enrolled, he replied that it was not the fault but the misfortune of the Highlanders in Greenock that they did not have Gaelic. This view found general acceptance, and another speaker declared that it would "never do to exclude those Highlanders who had been brought up in Greenock for the most part of their lives and had not had the opportunity of talking the language".³ It should not surprise the reader to learn, after reading such reports that Collector Campbell "was a well known and handsome Highland gentleman, who wore the kilt at his daily business,

1. G.A., December 6, 1859.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

and was a splendid specimen of a genuine Celt, both in walk and conversation".¹

The resolutions of the various meetings soon met with a favourable reply from the government, and permission was granted for the formation of a Highland Rifle Corps in Greenock. Collector Campbell was appointed Captain and Commandant, and there was an immediate response from Highlanders in the town, 142 coming forward initially, and two companies being eventually raised.² The men had to pay a substantial sum towards the cost of their uniforms,³ and the question of whether the unit should wear trows or kilts aroused considerable debate. An article in Gaelic appeared in the Greenock Telegraph on December 22, 1859, urging the "Highlanders of Greenock to gather about your brave leader, Collector Campbell. Stand by him and the kilt against the trows. Do not be ashamed to put on the dress that your fathers had of old. Nish, Nish, Nish." Collector Campbell had his way, and the kilt became the uniform of the new Highland Rifle Corps in Greenock.⁴

Clearly the whole atmosphere surrounding the new Corps, and the attitude of the Highlanders in Greenock towards the Volunteer movement was quite different in 1859 from what it had

1. Greenock Telegraph, December 22, 1859.

2. Lamont, op. cit., p. 28.

3. Ibid., p. 29.

4. Ibid., p. 29.

been at the end of the eighteenth century. In the 1790s there had been no suggestion that a separate Highland unit should be formed in the town, but in 1859 there was a very strong impulse to form a Corps which would be specifically Highland, and which would be Highland in personnel and in dress. Moreover, it would seem that the ordinary Highlanders living in Greenock were very much more enthusiastic and much more ready to enrol in the Volunteers and their own Corps than their predecessors had been sixty years earlier. Perhaps this change was brought about by the fact that the Highlanders in the town were by this time no longer so predominantly engaged in sea-faring activities.

Whatever the actual reason for the increased interest and involvement of the Highlanders in Greenock in the Volunteer Movement in the late 1850s, the Highland Corps soon came to seize the imagination and attention of the town. Collector Campbell was certainly a fine publicist, and the Corps' activities together with his own sayings and doings featured prominently in the columns of the local newspapers during the next few years. Celtic Games were held annually, sharpshooting contests were organised monthly, manoeuvres were reported extensively, and Celtic Balls became a highlight of the local social season.¹ The Highland Corps became a permanent and accepted element in the local scene, and its officers

1. G.A., July 25, 1867.

and men were accorded liberal praise and prestige.

The formation of Highland Volunteer units in the Lowland towns and cities with sizeable migrant populations was not, of course, unconnected with national needs and developments. The Crimean War had witnessed a drastic decline in the numbers of men coming forward from the Highland areas into the Highland regiments or other units. In Sutherland, the Duke of Sutherland met with a completely negative response when he attempted to recruit men for the army,¹ and this lack of response was also seen in Argyll. In the Greenock Advertiser in March, 1854, appeared a report of the sailing of a naval vessel to recruit men on Islay, but a few days later, the paper was lamenting the fact that it had returned "with very few volunteers, the Highlanders evidently preferring to live at home at ease to facing Russian bullets".² Certain commentators observed that "the Highlanders have no desire for military glory - the martial spirit is most completely gone".³

One commonly expressed reason for this change in the Highlanders' attitude towards military service was the clearance and eviction of the clansmen from their homes and glens.

1. Donald McLeod, Gloomy Memories of the Highlands of Scotland (Glasgow, 1892), pp. 165-6.

2. G.A., March 17, March 21, 1854.

3. G.A., May 22, 1855.

This view was put forward by a deputation of Greenock gentlemen who waited on Sir Colin Campbell, the victor of the Crimea, at Glasgow in July, 1856, with an address "by the Highlanders of Greenock and the descendants of Highlanders residing in Greenock and its vicinity". They expressed their regret that "the Gaels having been driven from their straths and glens like drift weed before the wind by the remorseless spirit of innovation", the Crimea must surely have witnessed the last battles of the Highlanders. Sir Colin in his reply showed an acute perception of national needs and of future developments by expressing his hope that their "sad forebodings as to the future of this ancient and noble people may be fallacious - or at least if they are doomed no longer to inhabit the wild glens and straths of their ancestors - that their blood will flourish in new settlements and will still furnish the same men".¹ How aptly and neatly did this Highland general analyse and summarise many of the motives behind the raising of new Highland Volunteer units in the Lowland towns and cities!

1. G.A., July 4, 1856.

LITERARY PRODUCTIONS

Not all of the energies of the Highland migrants in Greenock were taken up by martial pursuits in the Volunteers, however, for many of them were apparently quite active as authors and writers. Unfortunately little of the work produced in the town in the eighteenth century has survived, and often it is very difficult to trace the authorship of any poems, songs or pieces of prose belonging to this period. There is, however, an interesting suggestion that Highland migrants in Greenock provided the subject matter and inspiration, though not the authorship, of the famous song, "There's Nae Luck about the House". Jean Adam of Cartsideyke, the authoress, it seems, was writing of a noted Highland couple, Colin and Jean Campbell, who lived in Crawfordsideyke and were renowned for their matrimonial attachment. Colin Campbell was a ship's captain sailing from the port to the West Indies.¹

In the nineteenth century there was a much greater output of literary productions in Greenock, and much more is also known about the writers. The leading literary light of the early part of the century was John Galt, a native of Irvine who had come to Greenock with his family at an early age.² Galt indeed was the only local writer of any real quality

1. A. Rodger, Jean Adam of Cartsideyke (Greenock, 1866).

2. Dictionary of National Biography (1963-4 Edition), Vol. 7, pp. 828-32.

in this period, but there was a host of other writers who produced poems and prose for the local newspapers. Often these consisted in the stating of trite sentiments, or the effusion of emotional sentimentalities in classical or Gaelic verse. Many of the contributors not surprisingly preferred to remain anonymous, but from time to time their identities were revealed. Thus in 1854 the readers of the Greenock Advertiser were informed that the initials "J.McG", "for many years the familiar affix to sweet original verses that appeared occasionally in the columns of the Advertiser with great acceptance to our readers", represented a certain James McGregor, the parish schoolmaster at Lochgoilhead.¹

Some of the poets and prose writers, however, were highly regarded locally, and sometimes groups of patrons would provide support to have their works printed and published. One writer accorded this honour was Walter G. Weir, who in 1825 published a poem entitled The Hunters of Glenfinnart. Weir's origin was not disclosed, but he possibly had some Highland connections, and his poem gave a rather romantic view of the Highlands. Later in the century another writer, Hugh Buie, had a collection of poems published, and he certainly was a Highlander. He was a member of the Free Gaelic Church, and much of his subject matter was

1. G.A., March 24, 1854.

2. Walter G. Weir, The Hunters of Glenfinnart (Greenock, 1825).

3. Poems by Hugh Buie (Greenock, 1881).

religious. He also translated several Gaelic poems into English. Another interesting writer of poems and songs in Greenock in the nineteenth century was Neil Dougall, the composer of the tune 'Kilmarnock'.¹ His grandfather had been a pilot in Greenock in the early eighteenth century, and the name suggests that he might well have come from the Highlands.

Well represented as the Highland migrants in Greenock therefore were among the writers of poems and occasional verses, they were even more prominent in the writing of local history. The first historian of the town, for instance, was Daniel Weir, who, although himself a native of Greenock, was descended from the Weirs or McNairs of Cowal.² Weir, a bookseller in Greenock, and the son of a local merchant, was a versatile writer, and as well as his History of the Town of Greenock published in 1829, he also wrote several songs for the Scottish Minstrelsy, contributed poems to various newspapers, and edited three volumes of lyric poems. Nine of his poems are included in The Modern Scottish Minstrel edited by Dr. Rogers, and a biographical sketch is given of him. He is there said to have been "possessed of a fine genius, a brilliant fancy, and much gracefulness of expression".³

1. Poems and Songs of N. Dougall (Greenock, 1854).

2. A. Brown, The Early Annals of Greenock, p. 123.

3. C. Rogers, The Modern Scottish Minstrel (Edinburgh, 1856), Vol. 3, pp. 194-5.

Also prominent in the writing of local history in Greenock were George Williamson from Kintyre¹ and his sons. George Williamson, Senior, was extremely interested in the life of James Watt, and in 1840 he published a volume entitled Letters Respecting the Watt Family which gave an outline of the lives and careers of Watt's father and ancestors in Crawforddyke. His son, the Rev. James Williamson, continued this interest, and in 1856 he published much of the information that had been collected by his father in a work entitled Memorials of the Lineage, Early Life, Education and Development of the Genius of James Watt. Another son, George Williamson, Junior, gave in three works, Old Greenock (1836), Old Greenock (1838, Second Series), and Old Garteburn (1894), a scholarly, accurate and comprehensive account of the history of the town from the earliest times to the middle of the nineteenth century.

Another local historian was Dugald Campbell, provost of Greenock from 1879 to 1882, who published two volumes of Historical Sketches of the Town and Harbours of Greenock (1879, 1881). He himself was born in Greenock, but his family had come from Knapdale.² He was followed some years later by Archibald Brown, who produced his The Early Annals of Greenock in 1905. Brown was a native of Glendrukel³ and published

1. See p. 77.

2. A. Brown, The Early Annals of Greenock, p. 123.

3. Ibid.

other historical works, including The History of Cowal (1903). He was a fervent Highland patriot, and in his history of Greenock he extolled the part played by the Highland migrants in the town. Two later local historians were William Auld with his Greenock and Its Early Social Environment (1907) and H.M. Smith, who published The History of Greenock in 1921. Neither of these men was a Highlander, but the name 'Smith' in the area very often indicates Highland antecedents.

Clearly, therefore, the Highlanders in Greenock and their descendants played a very considerable part in the recording and writing of local history. In its own limited sphere Greenock had its Macgillivrays, its historians of Highland descent, and one might not perhaps be too fanciful in seeing in this phenomenon the supposed traditional interest of the Highlanders in the genealogy and history of their families and race. Certainly the local historians the Highlanders in Greenock wrote displayed a considerable interest in genealogy and important families. They also revealed a strong local patriotism, and here it seemed as if the authors were seeking to find in their new environment and its story and history something to satisfy their pride of race and tradition. As Highlanders they had always been conscious of their community and of the living past of their people, and now in Greenock they sought to find a similar identity and community to support and enrich their lives in the Lowland town and environment.

In the related fields of bookselling and publishing, too, Highlanders also played a prominent role in the life of Greenock. R.M. Smith claimed that "Highlanders were the literary pioneers of the town", and he asserted that a Highlander, William McAlpine, was the first bookseller in Greenock.¹ McAlpine was also the town's first printer, and in 1773 he printed the first book produced locally entitled Joana of Gospel Harrow and Sweet Invitations to Heaven's Blessings (Composed by William Tennant, wheelwright, Glasgow, and copied by John Finlayson, schoolmaster, Kilern).² McAlpine's second book was printed in 1780 and was entitled A Narrative of the Exploits and Adventures of J. MacAlpine, a native Highlander, in the American War from 1773 to 1779.³ It is not perhaps unreasonable to surmise that the author was some relative or connection of the printer in Greenock, and that his account came into the latter's hands through family connections. Many of the booksellers and printers who followed McAlpine in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were also Highlanders or had clear Highland names. These included Peter McCallum, in business between 1810 and 1820,⁴ and later in 1851, James McAlvie, the founder of a business

1. R.M. Smith, The History of Greenock, p. 296.

2. Ibid., pp. 360-1.

3. Copy in Greenock Public Library.

4. W. Hutchison, Greenock Directory (Sixth Edition, c. 1820) p. 43; Smith, op. cit., 355.

which has continued in the town to the present day.¹

It is not quite so easy to discover the extent to which Highland migrants in Greenock participated in the production and publishing of the local newspapers. The first newspaper produced in the town was the Greenock Advertiser, founded in 1802. A few years later its name was altered to the Greenock Advertiser and Clyde Commercial Journal, and as such it quickly became an established institution.² A few short-lived papers were produced in the following years, but none seriously rivalled the Advertiser till the appearance of The Greenock Telegraph and Clyde Shipping Gazette in 1857.³ For several years thereafter, the Telegraph, Liberal in politics, and the Advertiser, a Conservative paper, were keen competitors, but steadily the Telegraph gained the advantage. In 1884, the Advertiser ceased production, the reasons for its demise being given in its own columns: "In memoriam, The Greenock Advertiser, which having survived-emperors and revolutions, dies at last because the Conservative party to which its best efforts were devoted is so inspired by the spirit of Christian meekness that it prefers journals which misrepresent its sayings and revile its policy....."⁴ The Greenock Telegraph has

1. The Post-Office Greenock Directory for 1851-52, p. 147.

2. Smith, op. cit., pp. 355-6; copies in Greenock Public Library from 1803.

3. Smith, op. cit., p. 357.

4. G.A., April 8, 1884.

continued as a daily journal right down to the present. It has maintained a consistently Liberal tone and tradition, a factor not perhaps unimportant in preserving the strength of the Liberal Party in the town to this day.

Highlanders in Greenock almost certainly participated in all this activity and publication of newspapers, but unfortunately the biographical details are not sufficiently comprehensive to allow us to give concrete data. The first proprietor of the Greenock Advertiser in 1802 was Joan Davidson, a writer. Davidson was a native of the town, but if he himself were not of Highland descent, then he was connected by marriage to Highland migrants, his wife being a cousin of Matilda Sinclair, the wife of Thomas Campbell, the poet.¹ Matilda Sinclair's father, Robert Sinclair, had come from West Tarbert to Greenock in the 1760s.² He was a prominent merchant there for many years, but later he and his family moved to London. In 1813, Davidson sold the Advertiser to Peter McCallum, the local bookseller,³ and almost certainly the new proprietor was of Highland descent. Later in 1857, one of the founders of the Greenock Telegraph was a certain Mr. McKenzie, a native of Greenock, but also possibly of Highland origin.⁴ All

1. C. Williamson, Old Greenock (First Series), pp. 150-2; Smith, op. cit., p. 355; Dictionary of National Biography, Vol. III, p. 848.

2. O.P.R., Marriage Register, Greenock Mid Parish, 564/1, February 6, 1767; see p. 200.

3. Smith, op. cit., p. 355. 4. Ibid., p. 357.

these scraps of evidence, slight as they may be, do, therefore, suggest that the Highlanders in Greenock played some part in the founding and development of newspapers in the town.

Not only were the Highlanders in Greenock active as producers of newspapers or literary works, but they also appear to have provided a substantial part of the consumers' market for such productions. Thus Highland gentlemen in the town frequently subscribed towards the costs of production for various works, and their names often appear on the subscription lists. The second edition of Burns' works published in 1787, for example, contains the names of fifteen subscribers from Greenock, and several of these were Highland migrants in the town.¹ The fifth highest subscriber for the whole country was Mr. Patrick Campbell of Greenock with 40 copies (most probably Patrick Campbell of Ruddill).² Other subscribers were Baillie John Campbell of Ashfield, Mr. Archibald Campbell (probably the son of Alexander Campbell of Inverawe), Mr. John Campbell, jun., son of Baillie Campbell, Mr. Duncan Campbell of Auchlien, Mr. Alexander Shannan, probably from Aintyre, and a Mr. John McKenzie.³ Among the subscribers to Wair's History of

1. Robert Burns, Poems Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect (Edinburgh, 1787), pp. ix-xlvi.

2. Ibid., p. xvi.

3. Ibid., pp. ix-xlvi.

the Town of Greenock in 1829, moreover, were Alexander Campbell, Ballochyle, General Barroch of Gourcock (a descendant of a migrant from Jura), Colin Inmont, jun., James Gunn, Islay, George Robertson, and many other men with Highland names.¹

LOCAL SOCIETIES AND INSTITUTIONS

The interest the Highlanders in Greenock took in literary productions is also shown by their participation in the founding of the Greenock or Watt Library in 1783, the first subscription library in Scotland.² Among the 82 members who signed the original deed were several prominent Highlanders in the town, including Walter Ritchie, Duncan Campbell of Auchlian, Duncan Campbell of Glendarnel, Alexander Campbell, landwaiter (Table 13), Doctor Archibald Campbell of Inveraray, and Archibald Campbell.³ Much of Greenock's early cultural life centred around the Library, and around the associated Watt Club founded in 1813.⁴ The early meetings of this Club were held in a tavern, but in 1837 a Library and public rooms were built.⁵ Lectures on Watt and on topics of general interest were given, and steadily the institution

1. D. Weir, History of the Town of Greenock, pp. 127-30.

2. Smith, op. cit., p. 336.

3. Catalogue of the Greenock Library (1897), pp. 319-20.

4. Weir, op. cit., p. 81.

5. Smith, op. cit., pp. 332-3.

attracted to itself the cultural leaders of the town. Highlanders were among its members, and for many years⁵ the President of the Watt Club was the local historian, George Williamson, Senior.¹ Later in 1861 the membership of the Watt Club was merged into a new institution, the Philosophical Society.² In 1875, Mr. James McLean, sawmill owner and most probably of Highland descent, gifted this society £6,400 for the erection of a lecture hall and museum, afterwards known as the Watt Hall and Watt Museum.³

Other societies which were prominent in the social and cultural life of Greenock in the nineteenth century were the Burns' Club, founded in 1801,⁴ the Ardgowan Club "for Bowling, Curling and Quoiting",⁵ the Franklin Club (1839),⁶ the Mechanics' Institute (1830),⁷ the Y.M.C.A.,⁸ and the Temperance Institute.⁹ The movement for the formation of

1. Smith, op. cit., p. 332.
2. Ibid., pp. 339-40.
3. Ibid.; Reg. Ho., S.C., Renfrewshire, Record of Settlements and Inventories, Vol. 44, March 17, 1877, Folios 876-99.
4. Smith, op. cit., pp. 345-6.
5. The Post-Office Greenock Directory for 1851-52, Appendix, p. 33.
6. Ibid., Appendix, p. 32.
7. R.M. Smith, A Page of Local History - Being a Record of the Origin and Progress of Greenock Mechanics' Library and Institute (Greenock, 1904), pp. 9-12.
8. The Post-Office Greenock Directory for 1870-71, Appendix, p. 63.
9. The Temperance Reformation in Scotland with Special Reference to John Dunlop and Greenock (Greenock, 1928), p. 40.

a Burns' Club was initiated by the Greenock Ayrshire Society, and many of its members were from that county. Not surprisingly, however, the local Burns' enthusiasts became extremely interested in 'Highland Mary', who had died in the town, and most probably some Highlanders became involved in the activities commemorating her life and death.¹ Almost certainly, too, some of the Highland migrants became members of various other societies in the town. The Treasurer of the Ardgowan Club in 1851 was Duncan Alexander Campbell, while certain officials in that year such as Robert McLeod, Secretary of the Franklin Club, and Archibald McKinnon and Daniel McGregor, President and Vice-President respectively of the Greenock Total Abstinence Society, had distinctively Highland names.²

Although the evidence pointing to the Highland migrants in Greenock taking part in the activities of all these various societies is rather sketchy and is obtained partly from inference, there is much more information available concerning their participation in the proceedings of the Freemasons. The local historian, R.M. Smith, wrote in 1928 a Bi-Centenary Historical Sketch of the Lodge Greenock Kilwinning, No. 12, the oldest Lodge in the town (founded 1728), and his description and account of the early activities and records makes it quite clear that

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1. The Bulletin, November 15, 1920 - reporting the reinterment of 'Highland Mary' in Greenock Cemetery.
 2. The Post-Office Greenock Directory for 1851-52, Appendix, pp. 32-3.

from an early date in the eighteenth century, the Highlanders arriving in Greenock were joining this Lodge.¹ Among the Masters, for instance, were James McNeill (probably from Annapdale)² in 1744, John Buchanan in 1779, Donald McLean in 1782, Roger Stewart of Arran in 1785, Murdoch McLean, a Tidewriter in the Customs and friend of Colin Campbell of Balliveolan, in 1792,³ and Colonel Archibald Campbell of Askomel in 1795-6.⁴ Several of these men and others mentioned in the records were prominent in commerce and local affairs, and clearly Highlanders of wealth and influence were joining and accepting office in this Lodge in the eighteenth century. The records for the first fifty years of the nineteenth century are missing, but there is no reason to doubt that prominent Highlanders in Greenock continued to become members of the Lodge. Thus in the muniments and papers of Sir James Riddell of Ardnamurchan, there is a Masonic Certificate dated 7th March, 1813, issued by Greenock Kilwinning Lodge No. 14 (sic.) stating that "Our Brother Sir James Riddell, Baronet,..... was admitted a Member of our Lodge wherein he was raised to the Sublime degree of Master".⁵ Then shortly after the minutes

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1. Lodge Greenock Kilwinning, No. 12 - Bi-Centenary Historical Sketch, 1728-1928 (Greenock, 1929).
 2. Reg. Ho., Minutes of the Particular Register of Sasines, Argyll, Vol. 4, August 8, 1755, RS 65/4.
 3. Reg. Ho., Campbell of Balliveolan Papers, GD/13/213.
 4. Bi-Centenary Sketch, p. 28.
 5. Reg. Ho., Muniments of Sir James Riddell of Ardnamurchan, GD 1/395/15.

were resumed in 1847, it was recorded that James Johnstone Grieve, the Provost of Greenock and M.P. for the burgh, had become a member.¹

So far as the ordinary Highlanders in Greenock are concerned, it is much more difficult to determine how many of them actually joined this or other Masonic Lodges. There is, however, indirect evidence which would indicate that numbers of them did in fact become members. Thus Smith declared that "very soon in the experience of the Lodge Masonry began to make way in the domain of shipping, and in all departments of sea-faring, and onward from this time (early eighteenth century) applications from this service came in an almost constant stream".² Since the Highlands provided many men for the officers and crews of the ships sailing from Greenock in the eighteenth century, then it is reasonable to suppose that several of these Highland migrants were among the seamen joining the Masonic Lodge. That this trend continued in the nineteenth century is indicated by the further statement made by Smith that "with the introduction of steam there was a steadily growing number of engineers" joining Lodge Kilwinning.³

Although the Highland migrants in Greenock did, therefore, apparently participate fully in the general social and cultural

1. Bi-Centenary Sketch, p. 17; see pp. 221, 223.

2. Bi-Centenary Sketch, p. 21.

3. Ibid.

life of the community, they did also seek to establish specifically Highland societies to cater for the leisure-time needs of Highlanders in the town. The earliest references were to a Greenock Highland Society, a branch of the national Highland Society, in the 1820s;¹ and then to a Celtic Shinty Club in the 1840s whose members engaged in a shinty match on New Year's Day, in Highland dancing, and in Highland music and festivities.² In the 1850s several local Highlanders became members of Glasgow Highland societies, and parties travelled to the city to attend functions of, for example, the Glasgow Celtic Society.³ The founding of the Greenock Highland Rifle Corps in 1859, moreover, was accompanied, as we have seen, by the holding of annual Celtic Games and Celtic Balls.⁴ All this interest and activity reached a climax in 1873 with the forming of a Greenock Highland Society to provide a focus for the social life of the Highlanders in the town, and to assist in the "preservation of the language, literature, games, and dress" of the Highlands.⁵

This brief survey of the Highland societies formed in Greenock in the nineteenth century might at first glance give the impression that the Highlanders in Greenock were bent on maintaining their culture and traditions, and that they were

1. G.A., January 7, 1823.

2. G.A., January 6, 1843.

3. G.A., August 11, 1857.

4. See pp. 240-41.

5. G.A., January 16, February 11, 1873.

eager to create a Highland sub-culture in Greenock. Such a conclusion, however, would probably be quite erroneous. In the first place, it must be stressed that the Highlanders in Greenock did not display any great urge to found such societies until about the 1840s when the swelling stream of Highland migration to the town had been flooding in for over 70 years. After that date, moreover, it is very doubtful if any more than a small minority of the Highlanders in Greenock ever joined a Highland society. Considerable numbers, it is true, might attend Highland dances and functions, but even here it is probable that many of the ordinary Highlanders in the town failed to sustain any great interest. Very often it was the more prosperous Highlanders who were the most vociferous in their support for the aims and objectives of the various societies, while the ordinary Highlanders, for their part, frequently turned quietly aside.

Some support for these views can be discovered in the early experiences of the Greenock Highland Society, founded in 1873. The Society was launched with a flourish and the support of several notables, including prominent Highlanders in the town, J.J. Grieve, the local M.P., and Professor Blackie of Edinburgh, but the results did not quite measure up to their expectations. In its first report the Committee contrasted the response from the more prosperous Highlanders with that of the ordinary Highlanders in the town. "The more wealthy class of Highlanders in Greenock," they declared,

"have come forward to countenance the society with a degree of liberality that is highly encouraging - not fewer than 43 gentlemen have been enrolled as life members, the entrance fee for each being £5. As regards ordinary members," they observed plaintively, "notwithstanding the almost nominal entrance fee of 2/6d. and notwithstanding all the inducements offered by the society in the shape of concerts, interesting lectures, all more or less connected with the Highlands and Highlanders, the numbers enrolled up to this date has not been equal to the expectations of your Committee."¹

It is difficult to escape the conclusion, therefore, that the ordinary Highlanders in Greenock did not join the various Highland societies in any considerable numbers. The impression given is that these societies attracted the more prosperous Highlanders in the town, and those of the ordinary Highlanders who had strong ties and affiliations with their former homes, but that the majority of the Highlanders did not join them or soon drifted out of their orbit into one or other of the societies or institutions supported by the general community. In a sense there was an interesting similarity between the religious experiences of the Highlanders in Greenock, on the one hand, and their activities and participation in the social and cultural life of the community, on the other. There were specifically

1. G.A., December 16, 1873.

Highland societies, even as there were Gaelic Churches, but neither in the sphere of religion nor in social and cultural activities did these institutions attract the whole-hearted and complete support of sufficient numbers of the Highland migrants in Greenock to set them apart or cut them off from the general community.

CHAPTER 10ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE HIGHLAND MIGRANTS

One of the factors which must have affected the experiences of the Highlanders at all levels and in all spheres of life in Greenock was the attitude of the local population and of other groups in the community towards the newcomers. At all times, an immigrant population has found its life in a new community more difficult if it encounters active hostility from the natives and local-born citizens of the host country or area. Such a situation might well have existed for the Highland migrants in Greenock and other Lowland towns if indeed there had been, as some historians would have it,¹ active enmity between Lowlanders and Highlanders, but such antagonisms had been considerably modified by the eighteenth century as far as the Greenock area was concerned.² Thus there had been sufficient intercourse between people living on the southern shores of the Clyde and the peoples of the Highlands to make the inhabitants of Greenock familiar with the Highlanders and their ways.

1. See pp. 23-5.

2. See p. 53.

Nevertheless, there is some evidence that the Highlanders settling in Greenock did in fact encounter some opposition and hostility on the part of the population there. There has apparently been no general consideration of this topic in any pamphlet, book or newspaper article, but from time to time references were made to incidents which indicate that there was some antagonism to Highlanders in the town. Thus, for example, the Greenock Town Council Records reveal that there was considerable opposition to the Highlanders and to their being allowed to hold services in the Mid Kirk on Sabbath evenings in the 1780s. Many of the church members, it appears, were particularly concerned with the fact that their seats were being "abused on these occasions with grease (from candles), filth and vermin".¹ Here there is a clear suggestion that the Highlanders were regarded as dirty and verminous, and the classical mixture of pseudo-racial and economic motives and prejudices is perhaps revealed by the further statement that "the town's funds were hurt, by the seats in the said church not selling so well as they did before this practice took place".² It would appear, however, that the issue was primarily a social and economic one, and not indeed an example of real prejudice against Highlanders as such. Thus there is no evidence of any hostility

1. Greenock T.C.R., January 31, 1786.

2. Ibid, October 20, 1783.

towards the more prosperous Highlanders who were already established as church members and officials, but only against the poorer Highlanders whose actions were bringing about a fall in the value of the seat rentals in the church.

Another instance of hostility towards Highlanders in Greenock is to be seen in a case appearing before the Glasgow Court of Justiciary reported in The Scots Magazine in 1815. One Colin Telfer, flesher in Greenock, was accused of culpable homicide and killing Duncan McLean by striking him with a bone. Janet McKay, the widow of Duncan McLean, told in evidence how her husband had been walking in the flesh market in Greenock when one of the fleshers asked him to buy meat. He refused, and another flesher desired him to offer 3d a lb. for it. Again he refused, and this so angered the third flesher, Colin Telfer, that he called him a "Highland blockhead" and struck him with a bone, a blow from which he later died.¹ Probably there was some ill-feeling behind this incident, but the details certainly show that some of the inhabitants of Greenock were ready to address the Highlanders in the town according to the classical pattern of prefixing some epithet with the term 'Highland', a pattern which invariably denotes a certain degree of hostility and prejudice.

1. The Scots Magazine, Vol. 77 (October, 1815), p. 791.

In addition to the descriptions of these and other incidents involving Highlanders in Greenock, a number of reports and articles appeared in the local newspapers concerning the conduct, habits and attitudes of the Highlanders in their home districts and in other parts of the Lowlands; and the frequency with which such reports appeared would suggest that a general atmosphere of criticism towards Highlanders existed in some circles in the town. A common theme of many articles was that "the habits of the people (Highlanders) were indolent and slovenly".¹ Thus, for example, several stories appeared in the Greenock Advertiser in 1847 concerning the unwillingness of many destitute Highlanders to work for a living.² Of 300 Highlanders in Tires offered work by James Merry, Esq., of Glasgow, for instance, only 70 accepted. These 70, moreover, worked for only a few days, and then when their demand for a rise of 4/- a week was refused, "they set a piper amongst them to play the bagpipes and marched away". Another group of 50 Highlanders obtained work on the railways near Uddington, but "they grumbled at the hardness of the work", and "one by one they dropped off". Some gave as their reason for quitting the fact "that they heard there was meal away to Uist", and that "it was better to get it at their ease than to work hard".³

1. G.A., June 11, 1852. 2. G.A., January 26, February 12, 1847.

3. G.A., February, 12, 1847.

Rather similar accusations had been levelled against the fishermen from the Highlands and Islands in an article which appeared in the Greenock Advertiser some two years earlier in 1845.¹ The readers were there informed that if they went to the Broomielaw and visited one of "the purely Celtic crews", they would "find listlessness, stupidity, personal uncleanness, and faces which indicate a thorough disposition to over reach both in buying and selling"; but that if they visited an east coast boat at Port Dundas they would discover a superior type of fisherman who displayed "upright manliness, honesty, cleanliness, and a capacity for business". The writer then went on to declare that "the herrings fished and cured by the crews from the low country always command a readier market and a much higher price than those of the 'nabbies', as our coopers call the fishermen of the lochs in the West Highlands". Purchasers, it was said, had to examine every barrel bought from a Highland boat or crew, since they could "never depend on not being cheated, either in the quality of the fish or by imperfect and careless curing". One interesting aspect of this article is that it was written by a gentleman "for many years thoroughly acquainted with the herring trade" in Greenock. It was not unlikely that he himself was of Highland descent, and certainly he must have worked in this field with

1. G.A., July 11, 1845.

many Highland migrants in Greenock and their descendants, but nevertheless, he clearly regarded the Highlanders in their home areas as a distinct and quite separate group.

Other articles appearing in the Greenock Advertiser at various times referred to the Highlanders' greed, their unwillingness to pay taxes, and their general backwardness. In 1839, for instance, it was reported that a tourist travelling in the Highlands had complained of the "rapacity and indolence of the Highlanders", and this charge was eagerly taken up by the editor.¹ Again, in 1854, in an article describing how the inhabitants of one Highland parish had evaded the newly introduced dog tax by rounding up all the dogs and sending them off to the low country for sale, the editor observed that "our Highland neighbours have long been famed for their aversion to tax-gatherers and excisemen".² These were mild reproofs, however, compared with the later gibe that "the conduct of the Gaels.....is an improvement upon that of their ancestors who would have dined the taxgatherers Sassenach without the slightest compunction and probably given their bodies to the dogs they were sent to tax".³ A dislike of certain features of the traditional Highland scene was also displayed by the editor of the Advertiser in two articles in 1852. In one he wrote against the kilt being

1. G.A., September 20, 1839.

2. G.A., March 3, 1854.

3. Ibid.

introduced into Highland regiments, declaring that "we could wish to find this barbarous and unseemly habilment disused and entirely laid aside".¹ In the other article he was highly critical of the Gaelic language and expressed the opinion that it should be eliminated. "We believe," he wrote, "that this jaw-breaking tongue has received no improvement since it shot up at the Tower of Babel in the infancy of the world; and there is no need for trying to mend it".²

Another interesting and rather amusing example of prejudice against Highlanders in the Lowlands is described in the book Retrospect on An Artist's Life written by J. Kelso Hunter, and published in Greenock in 1868. It appears that there was a dispute over the presentation of a Highland minister, Dr. MacLeod,³ to the parish of Dundonald in Ayrshire in 1819, some of the congregation declaring forcefully that "he was 62 years of age, had a bad delivery, had a Highland howl, and read his sermons". A certain local celebrity known as May Tait was quoted as saying: "I canna for the life o' me see what auld Cloud gets to greet and laugh at. The body gi'es a growl o' a greet and a gape o' a laugh, and I can see nae sense in either o' them. I was

1. G.A., October 15, 1852. 2. G.A., June 11, 1852.

3. Rev. John MacLeod (1757-1841), native of Skye - he superintended the publication by the Highland Society of the Dictionary of the Gaelic Language, 2 Vols. (Edinburgh, 1828) - Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae, Vol. 3, pp. 36-7.

herin' that he was writing a Hielan' dictionary. He might do weel enough to preach to Hielan folk, but I'm sure he's no for this place."¹ Perhaps Mas Tait might escape prosecution under some of our modern legislation concerning race relations, but she was certainly not without prejudice against Highlanders!

Sometimes in nineteenth-century Greenock the prejudice against the Highlanders and the Highland migrants was expressed not in harsh criticisms, but in humorous stories which poked fun at them and depicted them as being particularly naive. One such story, which appeared in the Greenock Advertiser in 1829, told of a "young girl fresh from the West Highlands" who set out to pay a visit to her sister residing in Glasgow. On her arrival at the outskirts of the city, she knocked on the first convenient door she could find. When the householder appeared, the following conversation ensued: "Is this Glasco?" "Yes." "Is our Peggy in?" The householder was somewhat surprised, but soon discovered that "her mother had told her to inquire for Peggy at the first big door she came to in Glasgow".² Other popular stories described the failure of many migrants newly arrived from the Highlands to appreciate the complexities of the postal system. In 1804, for example, the Greenock Advertiser told of a letter being put into the

1. J. Kelso Hunter, op. cit., p. 67.

2. G.A., December 8, 1829.

Post Office in Glasgow with the following directions upon it: "hir she goes to Embroch to Donal my brither, Sherman to a Shermans-mester dun a back close yea stair up in the Cagait Embroch if that no be fin hir ut the Dill no be fin hir ut me deman you no to pit post on hir but let hir gang free".¹

A similar incident was reported in the Advertiser in 1838, this time the letter having been posted in the Rothesay Post Office: "To Mary McKellar, Duncan Ferguson's widow, if the Lord willeth at present a residenter in Inverglan, in the County of Cowal, Shire of Argyle, by Inveraray,

Lochfineside".² Clearly this writer had a somewhat strange and original sense of the relative importance of the various areas of Argyll! The naivete of many of the Highland migrants, moreover, is also frequently illustrated by reports referring to their falling victim to the wiles of confidence tricksters. In 1834, for instance, "a person from Islay" lost his watch, £5, and his umbrella to a crooked character practising the 'chain trick' in Greenock.³

Other popular stories that appeared from time to time in the Greenock newspapers made reference to some of the more amusing qualities and characteristics of the Highlanders. In 1834, for example, a writer in the Advertiser in reporting a dinner at Stirling gave a humorous description

1. G.A., March 30, 1804.

2. G.A., October 16, 1838.

3. G.A., June 9, 1834.

of the lengthy speeches made by two Highland speakers as they related the "martial deeds of their ancestors".¹

Another story in the Advertiser in 1803 poked fun at the names and manner of speech of the Highlanders. It told of "a Clergyman preaching....in a parish in the Highlands in the Erse language. He inveighed with great bitterness against the Antinomians, Arminians, and other religious sectaries. At going forth from the church, one of the audience, who, perhaps, was not singular in mistaking the nature of these enemies, sought explanation from his neighbour nearby in the following terms: 'Dear me Donald, wha's a' yon chieft; I ken the McPhersons, the McIntosh's, and the McLeods, but I never hae heard before of the Antinomianich or the Arminianich.'"²

Other writers found the claims already being made by Highlanders about the antiquity and purity of Gaelic highly amusing. In a report entitled 'Antiquity of the Gaelic' which appeared in the Advertiser in 1833, a contributor, who obviously was acquainted with the feuds and quarrels within Gaeldom, observed: "Mr. N. McAlpine in his Argyleshire Pronouncing Dictionary....tells his readers that the inhabitants of the Islands of Argyle pronounce Gaelic just as Adam spoke it. What will our friends of Inverness, Ross and Sutherland say to this?"³

1. G.A., September 18, 1834.

2. G.A., October 11, 1803.

3. G.A., April 18, 1833.

All these various stories, both serious and humorous, suggest the existence of a substantial level of prejudice against the Highlanders and the Highland migrants in Greenock in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but there were many other articles, incidents and reports depicting the Highlanders in a much more favourable light. Indeed the respect and admiration for the Highlanders and all things Highland which had been aroused in the nation at large by the achievements of the Highland regiments, the works of Sir Walter Scott, the Romantic Revival and the increasing interest in Highland scenery, and by the furor surrounding the Ossianic controversy,¹ had its counterpart in Greenock and amongst the citizens of the town. Thus in the early years of the nineteenth century many poems and articles appeared in the local newspapers praising the Highlanders. In the Greenock Advertiser of November 8, 1803, for example, there was a poem in Gaelic entitled 'The Highlanders', while in the Advertiser of December 30 in the same year there was an English poem entitled 'Address to the Highlanders of Scotland'. Plays and light operas with a Highland theme seem also to have been popular in the town at this time. An advertisement in the Greenock Advertiser of February 21, 1804, for instance, informed the citizens of Greenock that "By Desire, Our Favourite Comic Opera: 'The Highland Reel'"

1. W. Ferguson, Scotland: 1689 to the Present, pp. 263-5;
 G.S. Pryde, Scotland from 1603 to the Present Day, p. 214;
 T. Fontane, Across the Tweed, Introduction, pp. xii-xiii
 (Sir James Fergusson).

was being shown at the local Theatre.

A very favourable and sympathetic attitude towards the Highlanders was also displayed in Greenock during the 1830s and 1840s when certain areas of the Highlands and Islands were experiencing distress. In 1836, for instance, at a meeting called to provide aid for "the Highlanders suffering distress in the Western Highlands", the Provost remarked that this was "the first time a call had been made upon their charity from the north-west district of the Highlands", and he declared that it was well known that "the inhabitants of these districts would rather half starve than beg from the public".¹ Similar sentiments were again expressed in an article in 1846, when the local readers were asked to "contrast the calm endurance (of the Highlanders) with the outrageous and iniquitous doings of the self-determined paupers in Ireland. Ought we not to show, practically, that the struggles of industry, the endurance of calamity, the respect of law, and the love of independence, on the part of our countrymen, engage our attention and sympathy, more than even the urgent necessities of those who have no such natural claim upon us, and no such grounds for urging it".²

In the 1850s and 1860s, the references to the Highlanders and things Highland became ever more frequent and more favourable in the local press. This development was closely associated with a growing admiration for and interest in the

1. G.A., July 21, 1836. 2. G.A., December 22, 1846.

Highlands and in Highland activities in Greenock, an interest which brought about the formation of the Greenock Highland Rifle Corps in 1859 with all its attendant 'Celtic' activities. The whole atmosphere of approval and admiration was vividly seen in an article written by the editor of the Greenock Advertiser in 1873 on the Highland 'Clearances'. He was bitterly critical of the evictions, and though he admitted that many Highlanders were more prosperous in the Lowlands or in the overseas colonies, he declared forcefully that "if a teeming population, brave, virtuous, loyal, and happy, be the mainstay of a nation's strength, the Government that permitted the illegal and oppressive dispersion of the Highlanders, deprived the empire of the brightest jewel in the British crown".¹

It would appear, therefore, that the inhabitants of Greenock displayed rather ambivalent attitudes towards the Highlanders and towards the Highland migrants who settled in their midst during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Certainly many a Highlander in Greenock must have encountered prejudice and unpleasantness, and many must have found the humour directed at them and their ways, speech and idiosyncrasies particularly objectionable. Nevertheless, all these negative features were undoubtedly tempered by the real regard and admiration that was frequently shown for

1. G.A., October 7, 1873.

them and for their kinsfolk in the Highlands. Nor, it should be noted, did the Highlanders in Greenock experience as much opposition and hostility as did the Irish migrants. The references to the latter were all more bitter and more scathing, and the Town Council even recorded a desire to have their influx limited, an honour never seemingly accorded to the Highlanders. In 1818, "the magistrates were requested to convene with the Commissioner or Superintendent of the Poor in any measure deemed necessary by proclamation or otherwise for preventing the influx of Irish labourers by whom it is feared the contagion of fever is spread, and whose numbers of late have been greater or more frequent than at almost any former period".¹

1. Greenock T.C.R., March 9, 1818.

CHAPTER 11ASSIMILATION OF THE HIGHLAND MIGRANTS

The fact that the attitudes of the inhabitants of Greenock towards the Highland migrants were not entirely hostile must have made it easier for the Highlanders to become assimilated into the local community. That the Highland migrants were indeed rapidly assimilated is indicated by the extent to which they participated in the economic, social and religious life of the town. There were, as we have seen, certain occupations particularly favoured by Highlanders, and certain areas in the town where they settled in numbers, but they did not establish a complete dominance in any industry or occupation, on the one hand, or an exclusively Highland area or ghetto, on the other. In the same way, there were specifically Highland churches, schools and societies, but by no means did the migrants from the Highlands confine their activities exclusively to these institutions. To a very considerable extent, the Highlanders in Greenock spread themselves over the whole range of occupations, living areas, and religious, educational, and social institutions in the town. They were to be found in all ranges and ranks of society, and in many ways they conformed to the general patterns of life and work in the community.

A further measure of the degree to which the Highland migrants in Greenock were assimilated is provided by the marriages they contracted, either with partners from the Highlands or from other areas. This measure has the advantage that it can be quantified by an analysis of the Census Enumeration Books covering the town's population. The results of such an analysis for 1851 and 1891 are shown in Tables 52 and 53, the groups studied being the migrant groups and the local-born population selected in earlier Tables. For each year, the norm percentage of each group in the total population of married persons is also included to provide a standard of comparison.

One of the most interesting features to emerge from the results shown in Tables 52 and 53 is that the Highlanders in Greenock did tend to be married to other Highlanders living there to a significant extent. In 1851, 65.0%, and in 1891, 58.2% were married to a partner born in the Highlands as against norms of 15.9% and 10.3% respectively. The men and women of all groups, it is true, displayed a similar tendency to select partners from their own group, but only the Irish had a higher percentage of intra-group marriages, and most had a considerably smaller percentage of such marriages in both years. The percentages of marriages between Highlanders and members of the other groups, moreover, showed considerable variations. The figures for marriages between Highlanders and persons from Bute were a little

above the norm percentages; between Highlanders and persons from Greenock, Renfrewshire and the Lowlands about half of the norm figures; and between Highlanders and men and women from Ireland or England and Abroad only a very small fraction of the norm percentages. The figures here would indicate that marriages between the Highlanders in Greenock and the Irish were not very common. Marriages between Highland men and Irish women, indeed, were quite rare, there being only seven such unions appearing in the Enumeration Books for 1851, and eighteen in 1891. Perhaps, therefore there were some real grounds for the statement in the Greenock Advertiser in 1850 that "they (the Irish) and the Highlanders are far from good friends".¹ As far as the Irish migrants were concerned, it is evident that they were married to partners within their own group to a much greater extent than were the Highlanders, the percentages for the Irish intra-group marriages being 86.0% and 72.4% in 1851 and 1891 respectively, as against norms of 24.5% and 22.1%. Apparently the Irish were a much more closely knit group than were the Highlanders in the town, for only a relatively small number of them had selected partners from among the members of other migrant groups.

1. G.A., November 12, 1850.

The figures taken from the Census Enumeration Books for 1851 and 1891 have a certain disadvantage in that they do not distinguish between marriages contracted in Greenock, on the one hand, and marriages that had been solemnized between men and women in their home areas before they moved to the town, on the other. This does not perhaps significantly affect the results and the conclusions, but the Registers of Marriages for 1855, since they include the place of birth of the contracting parties, make it possible to measure the rate of inter- and intra-group marriages for the weddings that actually took place in Greenock in that year. Table 54 shows the results obtained from an analysis of the Registers of Marriages for Greenock in that year. The groups chosen were those studied in Tables 52 and 53, but here it was also possible to make some tentative separation of the Catholic and Protestant Irish, based on whether the marriage was solemnized according to the rites of the Catholic Church or one of the Protestant churches. This, of course, does not allow for the instances where the partners were of different religions, but by and large the distinctions and patterns seemed to be fairly meaningful. It did not, however, seem worth while distinguishing between the Catholic Highlanders and the Protestant Highlanders, for only 5 Highland women and 2 Highland men were married in a Catholic Church in Greenock in 1855. The two men hailed from Canna, and both were married to Highland women, one from Canna and the other from Arisaig.

The remaining three Highland women who were married in a Catholic Church in Greenock chose partners hailing respectively from Renfrewshire, the Lowlands and Ireland.

The general pattern of marriages for Highlanders in 1855 shown in Table 54 does not appear to have differed very much from the figures in Tables 52 and 53. The percentage of Highlanders marrying other Highlanders at 59.1% was slightly lower than the figure of 65.0% for 1851, and this is almost certainly accounted for by the fact that a number of the Highlanders married to Highlanders shown in the Census Enumeration Books for 1851 had been married before they arrived in Greenock. Once again, moreover, the percentage figure for marriages between Highlanders and persons from Bute was above the norm, but in this year the percentages for marriages between Highlanders and persons from Renfrewshire or the Lowlands of Scotland were considerably higher than in 1851 and 1891. Marriages between Highlanders and the migrants from Ireland, however, were once more comparatively rare, but there were a significantly higher number of marriages contracted between Highlanders and the Protestant Irish, than between Highlanders and the Catholic Irish.

In the figures for the Irish migrants there is a clear and significant difference between the percentages for the Catholic and the Protestant Irish. The percentage of intra-group marriages amongst the Protestant Irish was 60.0%, a figure remarkably close to the Highland percentage figure of

59.1%. The Catholic Irish, however, had a much higher percentage at 79.6% for intra-group marriages, showing that there was a much greater tendency for Catholic Irish men and women to marry amongst their own number than there was for the Protestant Irish to cling to their own group. The Catholic Irish, therefore, were preserving their identity and exclusiveness to a much greater degree than were the Protestant Irish, and they were clearly much more difficult to assimilate than were the Protestant Irish, the Highlanders, or any other group in the community. Men and women from all of the various migrant groups married partners from within their group to a significantly greater extent than the norm figures, but the various migrants from Renfrewshire, the Lowlands, Bute and England were very much less restricted in their choice than were the Irish and the Highlanders. The local-born also tended to marry from amongst their own number to a significant extent, but large numbers of them chose partners from amongst all of the groups of newcomers arriving in the town.

For the eighteenth century it is much more difficult to obtain detailed information about the degree of inter-marriage between members of the various migrant groups in Greenock, but the surname count method of identifying Highlanders used earlier might also be of some value here. In Tables 55 and 56, therefore, are shown the results and percentages for the intra- and inter-group marriages of

the three groups, Highland, Doubtful and Non-Highland for the periods 1761-75 and 1776-90. In both periods there was apparently a distinct tendency for men and women with Highland surnames to select partners with similar names, the relevant percentages being 33.5% and 44.2% as against norms of 25.6% and 30.9% respectively. Certainly the method adopted is not entirely satisfactory, but it would appear that the general situation and trends were not so different from those in the nineteenth century. Highlanders did at this time also display a tendency to select marriage partners from among the members of their own group to a significant extent, but many of them, on the other hand, did marry men or women from amongst the local-born or the other migrant groups in the town. Indeed, the percentages of persons with Highland surnames marrying persons with Non-Highland names at 39.9% and 32.6% in 1761-75 and 1776-90 respectively were not so very different from the percentages of Highlanders married to non-Highlanders in 1851 and 1891.

A study of the marriage patterns displayed by the various migrant groups in Greenock in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, therefore, would indicate that the Highlanders in the town did in fact seek each other out to a very significant extent. In the nineteenth century, when reliable figures were available, somewhere in the region of 60% of all married Highlanders in Greenock had a partner who was also from the Highlands. This figure would seem to

suggest that the Highlanders in Greenock were indeed a coherent, cohesive and well-defined group, with strong group loyalties and affiliations, and that there was in fact a recognisable Highland community in the town. On the other hand, the percentage of Highland intra-group marriages was always just under the critical figure of 66.6%, the break-even point where the number of homes and households with two Highland parents would equal the number of households with one Highland and one non-Highland partner. Strong as the affiliations and group consciousness of the Highlanders in Greenock were, therefore, they were not cutting themselves off from the general community to such an extent as to make assimilation difficult; for in the following generation, assuming equal rates of fertility, there would be as many children from mixed households with one Highland partner as there would be from households with two Highland parents.

An important element in the marriage patterns of the Highlanders and the other migrants in Greenock was the age at which they made their first ventures into matrimony, for if there were significant differences in the average age for Highlanders and for the members of other groups, then the size of families would most probably be affected. To study this question, the average ages of first marriage for the members of the various migrant groups and the local-born in Greenock were compiled from the Greenock Registers of Marriages for 1855, and the results obtained are shown in Table 57.

It would appear that there was a tendency for the Highlanders in the town to marry at a rather later age than the average of the general population, this tendency being slight for the Highland men (26.72:26.16), but much more marked with the Highland women (25.57:23.49). These findings, moreover, were confirmed by an analysis of the 1851 Census Enumeration Books to discover the percentages of those single at selected ages (Table 58). At ages 20-4 and 25-9, a significantly high percentage of both Highland men and Highland women in the town were still unmarried, although by the 45-9 age level their percentages did not differ very greatly from those of the general population. In marked contrast to the Highlanders were the Irish men and women in Greenock, who appear to have married at a much earlier age (24.18 and 22.80 respectively). Their percentages of men and women remaining single in all three age groups were also significantly lower than those for the total population of the town, and indeed they bore more resemblance to the "Eastern European" marriage pattern described by J. Hajnal than to the "European" pattern with its later average for marriage and larger percentage of women remaining single.¹ Thus, for example, it will be observed that the various percentages for the Irish migrants in Greenock in 1851 at the different age levels are closer to those for Greece in 1907 than to those for Great Britain in 1900.

1. J. Hajnal, 'European Marriage Patterns in Perspective' in Population in History, ed. by D.V. Glass and D.E.C. Everaley, pp. 101-43.

A comparison between the average age of marriage for the Highland migrants in Greenock, and that for the Highlanders in their home areas reveals certain apparently differing trends. In the eighteenth century, the evidence of observers in the Highlands was somewhat contradictory. William Tod, one of the Managers of the British Linen Company, for instance, declared in 1754 that "the people of that country (the Highlands) marry when young",¹ but Newte in 1791 wrote that the Highlander was "above 30, as well as his wife, at the time of their marriage".² Newte also quoted a contemporary as saying that "their women are seldom married young; and are indeed long unmarriageable".³ In the nineteenth century, however, the balance of evidence seems to suggest that the age of marriage in certain areas of the Highlands was relatively low. Colonel Stewart of Garth, for example, compared an earlier period when men and women waited till they could secure a home and farm with the situation obtaining in his day when the uncertainties of tenure had "removed the restraint which the prudent foresight of a sagacious peasantry had formerly imposed on early marriages".⁴ He also remarked that since the young Highlanders had "no certainty of being

1. Reg. Ho., Records of the Board of Trustees for Fisheries, Manufactures and Improvements in Scotland, Copies of Annual Reports to the Crown, Vol. 4, p. 57. NG 1/7/4.

2. T. Newte, op. cit., p. 243.

3. Ibid., p. 267.

4. Stewart, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 88.

permitted to remain in their native country on any terms, they marry whenever inclination prompts them".¹ The same views were expressed by the minister of Tires in 1843, the Rev. Neil McLean, who declared that the inhabitants of the island had a "great inclination to contract early marriages".² It would appear, therefore, that the Highlanders in Greenock in the mid-nineteenth century were marrying rather later in life than were the Highlanders who had remained at home in some districts of the Highlands. This conclusion, of course, requires verification by extensive research into the Registers of Marriages for the Highland counties showing the actual average ages of marriage, but clearly such research might be extremely valuable in throwing further light on the changes in habits and customs brought about among the Highlanders by their migration to the Lowlands.

It might well be, however, that the fact that the Highland migrants in Greenock married at a rather later age than did the members of some of the other groups in the town, or many people in the Highlands, was a consequence, not of any difference in racial or cultural habits, but of the type of occupations they followed. Many of the Highland girls in Greenock were domestic servants, and there was a strong pressure on such girls to postpone marriage. Hume in the

1. Ibid.

2. Poor Law Inquiry (Scotland), 1844, P.P., 1844, Vol. XXI, p. 131.

1740s had declared that "at present all masters discourage the marrying of male servants and admit not by any means the marriage of the female",¹ and this attitude continued throughout the nineteenth century. The Irish girls, on the other hand, worked very largely in the mills and factories where there would be no pressures on them to delay marriage. Nevertheless, even if this question of occupation choice were largely responsible for the differences between the average age of marriage for the Highland migrants and that for other groups in Greenock, these differences must have been important in their lives in the town and for their assimilation to the ways and customs of their new community.

GAELIC

One of the factors that might have been expected to keep the Highland migrants in Greenock apart from other sections of the community and to have been a barrier to their assimilation was their Gaelic language. Gaelic was certainly the principal language of most Highlanders arriving in Greenock throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and for long periods it was commonly spoken in the town. A Greenock minister in the 1790s declared that one could walk from one end of the town to the other without hearing a word

1. D. Hume, 'On the Populousness of Ancient Nations', in Essays (1907 Edition, Routledge, The New Universal Library), pp. 275-6.

of English,¹ while in the early nineteenth century some Gaelic features and advertisements appeared in the Greenock Advertiser.² These advertisements might have been directed at the inhabitants of the Highland areas where the newspaper circulated, but they would also be aimed at the very considerable Gaelic population in the town. Clearly, therefore, there was a situation in Greenock where the Gaelic language might have been preserved as the language of an important minority, even as some European languages have been preserved in the cities of the United States.

Such a situation, however, did not develop in Greenock, and over the years the use of Gaelic steadily declined. There are no statistical measurements of the numbers of Gaelic speakers in the town for the eighteenth century, and for the early part of the nineteenth century, but from 1881 onwards subjects were asked by the census enumerators if they were Gaelic speakers only, if they could speak Gaelic and English, or if they were non-Gaelic speakers. The results obtained for the questions asked concerning Gaelic in certain of the 10-yearly census enumerations in Greenock between 1881-1961, together with the numbers of Highlanders in the town and the percentages of the Highlanders there who were Gaelic speakers in the various years, are shown in Table 59.

1. O.S.A., Vol. 5, p. 583.

2. G.A., September 12, 1806, July 4, 1836, August 15, 1836.

Perhaps, however, one might add a caution as to the accuracy of the figures in the census enumerations. In the early years, it appears, the enumerators were rather vague about what they were actually asking. Some in Greenock seemingly confused Irish Gaelic with Scottish Gaelic, and in 1891, for example, about 100 people who were born in Ireland were listed as Gaelic speakers.¹ Since some of the other Gaelic speakers listed as born in Greenock and elsewhere might also have been of Irish origin and speakers of Irish Gaelic, we might have here one distorting factor that would have inflated the figures for the numbers of Gaelic speakers in the early years. Nevertheless, the numbers involved were not large enough to invalidate the general findings, and the trends depicted in Table 59 must be reasonably close to the actual position.

If, therefore, the figures in Table 59 are accepted as being not too distorted, they provide most convincing evidence for the decline in the number of Gaelic speakers in Greenock from at least 1891. Since, moreover, the number of Gaelic speakers was consistently smaller than the number of Highlanders in the town, this would perhaps suggest that the Highlanders in Greenock were not passing the language on to their children, and that the numbers of Gaelic speakers in the town were being maintained to a limited extent only by fresh waves of

1. Information abstracted by the present researcher from the 1891 Census Enumeration Books for Greenock, 564/1-2.

migrants from the Highlands. There is also some evidence in the decline in the percentage of Gaelic speakers among the Highlanders in Greenock between 1891 and 1951 that Gaelic was losing its hold in those areas of Argyll from which the Highland migrants were coming to the town.

To test the conclusion that Highland parents in Greenock were failing to teach their children Gaelic, an analysis was made of the languages spoken by children born in Greenock of Gaelic-speaking Highlanders, as given in the Census Enumeration Books for 1891. The numbers of those listed as speaking Gaelic only and Gaelic and English were combined, and only children of four and over were considered. A distinction was made between households where both the father and mother were Gaelic-speaking, and those households where the mothers only or alternatively the fathers only were Gaelic-speaking. The results are shown in Table 60.

The figures and percentages appearing in Table 60 reveal a very significant decline in the number of Gaelic speakers in Greenock from one generation to the next. In the households where both parents were Gaelic-speaking, only 17.2%, or less than 1 in 5, of the children spoke Gaelic. In the households where only one of the parents was Gaelic-speaking, moreover, the situation was even more astonishing, with over 99% of the children in each instance being unable to speak the language. There seems to have been a slight tendency for Highland mothers to teach their children Gaelic to a

greater degree than Highland fathers, but this was so insignificant in actual numbers or percentages as to mean very little in practice.

Clearly we have here more than a gradual and casual abandoning of Gaelic by the Highland migrants in Greenock. Many of them, it is true, must have been bi-lingual, and it might have been more convenient for them to speak English in their new environment, but it is difficult to escape the conclusion that they made a deliberate decision not to teach their children Gaelic. Perhaps it was that the Highlanders felt their position so keenly in the face of Lowland taunts that they deliberately tried to erase those characteristics that set them apart. We have seen the type of amusing story that was frequently related locally to depict the Highland migrant as a naive, ignorant and unsophisticated yokel, and this must obviously have hurt many sensitive newcomers from the Highlands. Their language was a unique symbol of their position and status, and thus they might well have tried to refrain from speaking it, or at least not to burden their children with it.

Connected with this feeling of insecurity and vulnerability, perhaps, was the belief that if children learnt Gaelic, then this might interfere with their learning of English and their fluency in this language. Many Highland parents must quickly have come to assume that a sound knowledge of English was vital if their children were to prosper. English

was the language of the Lowland community, the language of the business and working world, and therefore it was clearly of much more practical use than Gaelic could possibly be. If Gaelic and a knowledge of Gaelic were held to stand in the way of a person acquiring fluent English, then Highland parents were likely to conclude that they should refrain from teaching their children their own language.

Some evidence that such attitudes were indeed present and operative in Greenock in the nineteenth century is to be found in the pages of the local newspapers and in the remarks of various eminent individuals in the town. An editorial in the Greenock Advertiser on June 11, 1852, for example, urged the elimination of Gaelic entirely. "We believe that this jaw-breaking tongue.....is one bar to Highland amelioration," declared the editor, "and renders our countrymen belonging to the Highland districts foreigners to their fellow-citizens. Older Highlanders regard it as a very expressive vehicle for devout sentiment, but how can this be considering the poverty of the language..... It is a matter of great consequence to have English taught universally to the rising Celts, who, in many, if not most, cases will require to leave their native hills and villages for scenes of exertion. Indeed....it would be great matter to have Gaelic extinguished altogether as a spoken language. There is no use for it in the world, and it stands in the way of the well-doing and well-being of those whose only principal language it unfortunately happens

to be."

This attitude towards Gaelic was not an uncommon one on the part of Lowland writers and speakers at this time, but the rather surprising feature is that it was seemingly shared by many Highlanders. Thus the hostility often shown in the Highlands by the church authorities and the teachers of the S.P.C.K. towards the teaching and speaking of Gaelic¹ was often paralleled in the Lowland towns and cities by the Highland religious leaders there. At a Congregational Meeting and Social in the Greenock Gaelic Church reported in the Greenock Advertiser on April 25, 1854, for example, a group of ministers trotted out several very intriguing reasons for abandoning Gaelic. The Rev. Dr. McCulloch of Greenock refused to admit that the language was barbarous, but he was prepared to agree that Gaelic was "behind the age". He did not advocate the banishment of Gaelic altogether, however, but instead he declared that "he would cultivate it that it might disappear, feeling convinced that the desire of knowledge which cultivation excited would prompt, and that most effectually, to the acquisition of the tongue through the medium of which it could be most satisfactorily and fully grasped". These rather Machiavellian tactics were more fully developed when "he concluded by assuring the meeting

1. J.L. Campbell, Gaelic in Scottish Education and Life, pp. 40-81; J. MacInnes, The Evangelical Movement in the Highlands of Scotland, pp. 245-6; cf. also, F.G. Rea, A School in South Uist, pp. 80-1.

that the way to win a Highlander's confidence was to treat him with confidence, imitating in this respect the master stroke of policy performed by the great Lord Chatham, who instead of punishing the disaffected Highland population enlisted them in the army to fight for the House of Hanover, whose claim to the throne they previously refused to admit". The most astonishing feature of this whole performance was that, according to the report, the Rev. Dr. "sat down amid loud applause, a demonstration of satisfaction which also greeted his speech at frequent intervals during its delivery". Here the Highlanders of Greenock, many of them obviously Gaelic speakers, were cheering and applauding a declaration of intent that they and their children should be tricked out of their language and persuaded to learn English by deceit. Proponents of the reputedly modern methods of brain-washing might well study this whole performance with profit and still be left wondering how the victims were so easily won over.

Another speaker whose views were greeted with loud applause and cheering was Professor Robertson of Edinburgh who declared frankly that "what was wanted was not only such an education that would enable them to translate from the Gaelic to the English language, but such as would translate themselves, a Highland people into a Saxon population". "This was to be done by week-day meetings," he went on, "and in addition to the ordinary Sabbath or common school exercises, in which the wisdom and position of the pastor, faithfully

and judiciously employed, would be productive of the happiest results. The minister, when in a proper position, was a sort of dayaman; he knew the lowlands and could sympathise with the Highland population, and in their difficulties and struggles in the battle of life - in scenes so different from what they were ever before placed in - give them lessons of practical wisdom which were of the utmost value." He concluded by stating that he was "glad to find the new minister of the Gaelic Chapel in Greenock had commenced such a course of week-day meetings - and he had no doubt that they would be attended with the best possible results".

Some of the most interesting sentiments were expressed by the Rev. Mr. McFarlane of Arrochar, a prominent Gaelic minister of the time. Mr. McFarlane had himself come as a boy to live in Greenock "without a sixpence", but he "made his way by the friendships he contracted, especially with the late worthy Mr. Colin Buchanan and the Rev. Dr. Gilchrist". He secured an education, worked as a teacher in the Highlands, later studied divinity at College, and then became a Parish Minister. The general theme of his speech was an assertion of the Highlander's ability to make good in the Lowlands, and of the virtues of hard work and ambition. He referred to the common opinion that the Highlanders were lazy, but retorted that "whenever they were taken from home and placed in the world of a city or a large town, they made their way not only to positions of respectability but of affluence and

eminence". He then gave several examples of Highlanders who had achieved success, including Sir James Campbell of Stracathro, William Campbell, Esq., of Tillechewan, Macaulay, Thomas Campbell, and a few others. Interspersed with these homilies were occasional anecdotes describing the humorous incidents that could arise through difficulties in translation between Gaelic and English. His favourite told of the Highland minister, unfortunately not very fluent in English, who pronounced that a young couple "were now of one 'beef'!" Throughout his speech the virtues of Victorian respectability and position were given the highest precedence, and anything such as Gaelic, Highland culture, and Highland mannerisms that stood in a person's way of attaining them, were to be shunned and erased as rapidly as possible. The ideal model was the Highland lad who worked hard in the Lowland towns and cities, and so raised himself to a respectable and eminent position in society. Moreover, in his repeating of the kind of stories which poked fun at the Highlanders, their mannerisms and their difficulties with English, the Rev. Mr. McFarlane was clearly implying that he himself had passed beyond this stage, and that any sensible and reasonable Highland lad in Greenock would seek to do likewise. They would certainly not attempt to cling on unnecessarily to a language that could only be an obstacle to the attainment of this very desirable end.

PROCESS OF ASSIMILATION

The reasons for the relatively rapid assimilation of the Highlanders in Greenock thus become reasonably clear. In the first place, none of the traditional institutions which have fostered and maintained group solidarity among immigrant populations in a new community and environment operated to preserve permanently a sense of identity among Highlanders in Greenock. The Highlanders' Academy, for instance, soon lost its Highland character, while the schools set up in connection with the Gaelic churches had the expressed intention of transforming the Highlanders into diligent, ambitious and respectable Lowlanders. Nor did the Gaelic churches permanently preserve Highland characteristics and culture, for the ministers and leaders were quite certain that their function was to provide Gaelic services and observances only until such time as the Highland migrants could receive them in English. The situation was in direct contrast to that influencing the large numbers of Irish Catholics who arrived in the town during the nineteenth century and who found that their schools and their Church set them apart from the rest of the community and made it more difficult for them to marry with other groups in the town.

Of some importance, too, in bringing about the rapid assimilation of the Highland settlers in Greenock was the fact that their natural leaders were practically at one in

urging the migrants to abandon their language and their way of life, and to adopt as quickly as possible the ambitions, standards, values and culture of the Lowlands. The ministers, for example, were continually stressing the importance of acquiring Lowland habits and virtues, and this undoubtedly had a considerable impact. The success of these exhortations was seen particularly in the extent to which the Highland migrants failed to teach their children Gaelic. Seemingly many were convinced by the urgings of their mentors that Gaelic was a primitive language and would hold them back in the struggles of life, and that their salvation in this world and the next depended on their abandoning their primitive Highland past.

There seems little reason to doubt, moreover, that the reasons given by the ministers and the Highland leaders in urging the Highland migrants to adopt Lowland ways were in fact those which had influenced their own actions and conduct. Members of the Highland landed families in the eighteenth century eagerly seized the opportunities in trade and commerce presented by the expansion of Greenock, and they readily conformed to the life of the Lowland town. They married into prominent local families, and quickly they entered into the social and religious life of the community. Their example was followed by the more prosperous Highland settlers in the nineteenth century, the desire to win social respectability and eminence clearly being a dominant motive in their careers. The ministers, for their part, undoubtedly believed that their

charges would become more virtuous and more Christian if they acquired Lowland habits and ambitions instead of their former Highland characteristics. All in all, therefore, it would appear that the Highland leaders were the pace-setters, their example was then followed by the middle classes, and that their urgings and actions caused many in the lower ranks of society to adopt Lowland ways.

Among the ordinary Highlanders in Greenock, however, there were large numbers who did not conform exactly to this pattern, and who were not prepared to follow the lead of the ministers and the more prosperous classes. These were the migrants who failed to join the Gaelic or any other Church in the town, and who failed to become members of the various Highland Societies or the Volunteers. These individuals seem to have lost contact with their Highland background, at least in an institutional sense, and their only links would be with their friends and relatives, either in Greenock or in the Highlands. They, too, were therefore liable to be rapidly assimilated, though they were not responsive to the same extent to the urgings of the Highland ministers and leaders. Their natural affiliations came to be with their workmates, their place of employment, their local areas, and their social class, and these would create new links, loyalties and ties in their lives. Insensibly they would come to acquire the loyalties, standards, interests, values and outlook of their class, occupation and rank in the new

community, and thus in a relatively short time they would become the typical industrial, commercial, or labouring workers of the town of Greenock.

One of the reasons why so many Highlanders settling in Greenock abandoned their Highland affiliations and did not retain their links with their natural leaders and with the Highland institutions in the town was perhaps the break down and disruption of the structure of Highland society that had been going on from at least the early eighteenth century.¹ In a sense the Highlanders were not coming to Greenock from a clearly defined and well stratified and delineated society, but from one which was in the process of change and decay. They were thus often in the position of individuals rather than members of a community, and it was, therefore, much easier for them to abandon their past background than if their social and community ties, and their old society had been more vigorous and alive. As individuals with no firm loyalties and affiliations to a clearly defined society which ensured them an acknowledged place in its ranks, they would be much more readily assimilated into their new communities. A minority followed the natural leaders of their old society and clung to the mutilated and castrated Highland culture which survived

1. E.R. Cregeen, 'The Changing Role of the House of Argyll in the Scottish Highlands', in History and Social Anthropology, Ed. I.M. Lewis, p. 165.

in Lowland exile societies, but the majority of the Highland migrants drifted away completely. They and their children became Lowlanders and ignored the pseudo-Highlanders and Highland societies of the Lowland towns and cities.

The divergence postulated in this survey between the experiences and the pattern of assimilation for the more prosperous migrants and those who accepted their leadership, on the one hand, and the ordinary and working class Highlanders who rejected it, on the other, made very little difference in actual practice in Greenock, for both groups, in their own way and fashion, were quickly assimilated into the local society. In other places and countries, however, where the leaders and upper classes were for some reason or other desirous of preserving effectively their Highland ways and identity, then the experiences of the two groups might possibly have been radically different. Such a consideration is of some importance, for too readily, perhaps, historians have assumed that certain migrations of Highlanders were of a monolithic nature, and that the experiences, attitudes and pattern of assimilation of the middle and upper classes were inevitably shared by those of the lower classes who accompanied them. This is perhaps most clearly seen in the interpretation and analysis of the Highland migration to North Carolina and the southern colonies in the eighteenth century,¹ and perhaps in the assessment of

1. Ian C.C. Graham, Colonists from Scotland: Emigration to North America, 1707-83.

the whole position of the Scots migrants in the American colonies before the War of Independence.¹ Here a picture is commonly painted of the Highland migrants having been led by the tackmen and of their unanimously supporting the Loyalist cause in the Revolution. There might well have been a large number of Highlanders, however, whose experiences have been ignored in this traditional view. Thus those who emigrated individually, or those who left the group in North Carolina shortly after their arrival, might well have merged into the community in the Colony, even as many of the Highland migrants merged into the local community in Greenock. In the same way, many Lowland Scots in the colonies might have blended into the general background and have become Revolutionaries, although the image of the Scots in the Revolutionary period was determined by the attitudes and actions of a small handful of middle class traders and merchants in the Colonies. Such a hypothesis, of course, would require to be put to the test of objective evidence, but without doubt one can at least question the earlier theses and assumptions. These have been based on the available literary evidence, which in the main has been concerned with only the middle and upper classes, and thus their experiences have been taken as the norm. Some study of the lower class emigrants in greater depth would

1. Ibid; James G. Leyburn, The Scotch Irish.

seem to be essential before we can accept that their experiences were indeed identical with those of the more prosperous classes.

SECTION III

AN ANALYSIS OF THE FACTORS CAUSING MIGRATION FROM THE HIGHLANDS

CHAPTER 12CAUSES OF MIGRATION FROM THE HIGHLANDS

Not only do the various studies pursued in this thesis provide information concerning the pattern of migration from the Highlands to Greenock and about the experiences of the Highland migrants there, but they also add something to our understanding of the factors that caused the migrants to leave their home areas. The whole question of motivation, however, is clearly so complex and complicated as to be beyond the scope of this thesis, for it would require a detailed and microscopic analysis of all the Highland areas for its satisfactory elucidation. Nevertheless, an examination of this problem and the current views and theories in the light of any novel findings produced in this investigation might prove of considerable value.

Most writers and scholars from the Earl of Selkirk in the early nineteenth century to more modern historians such as Malcolm Gray have stressed the economic factors inducing the Highland people to leave the Highlands. There has been general agreement that the Highland area, affected like many other parts of Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by an increase in population, by an impulse towards agricultural reorganisation, by a movement of peoples

from rural to urban areas, and by a switching of workers from agriculture into commerce and industry, failed to develop the industries or to create the towns that would have mopped up the displaced and surplus population. In the late eighteenth century there were some developments in the fishings, the kelp industry and in agriculture to give a promise of economic advance, but with the decline of the kelp and fishing industries in the nineteenth century, the growing population, increasingly dependent on the cultivation of potatoes, came to press on scarce resources to such an extent that destitution and large scale emigration from the area seemed inevitable whenever the potato crop failed. Some of this emigration was assisted and initiated by landlords, and much of the immediate impulse arose from their raising of rents in the nineteenth century, but with or without their intervention, the movement went on inexorably.¹

Many of the findings and features of the earlier sections of this study certainly confirm and amplify the importance of economic factors in inducing emigration from the Highland areas in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Thus the local references to and descriptions of the movements of the

1. T. Douglas (Earl of Selkirk), Observations on the Present State of the Highlands of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1805); M. Gray, The Highland Economy, 1750-1850; G. Pryde, Scotland from 1603 to the present day (London, 1962), pp. 150-61; W. Ferguson, Scotland: 1689 to the Present, pp. 175-7; G. Donaldson, The Scots Overseas, pp. 47-56; R.H. Campbell, Scotland Since 1707, pp. 34-7, 168-76; The Future of the Highlands, Ed. D.C. Thomson and I. Grimble, pp. 17-25; D.F. MacDonald, Scotland's Shifting Population, 1770-1850, pp. 31-45.

poorer sections of the Highland population, as given, for instance, in the local newspapers, The Statistical Account of Scotland and The New Statistical Account of Scotland, and the Town Council Records, all testify to the importance of distress, pressure of population and destitution in driving many Highlanders from their homes, particularly from the 1830s onwards. On the other hand, the 'pull' of a port and industrial town like Greenock was amply illustrated, with Highlanders flocking to the buss fishings and the ships sailing from Greenock in the eighteenth century, and entering into a wide range of skilled occupations for which their experience in the Highlands had trained them in both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The life stories of the members of the landed families in Greenock in the eighteenth century, and the extent to which a host of migrants and their descendants sought successfully to gain an improved occupational and social status in the town would also indicate strongly that the hope of personal advancement and improved economic and living standards were powerful motivating factors among large numbers of Highlanders.

Nevertheless, despite the importance and perhaps primacy of economic factors, a close study and examination of the sources relating to Greenock and to those Highland areas which sent large numbers of people to the town reveals that there were also very powerful social pressures and forces bringing about migration from the Highlands. The various

records indicate, for example, that there were substantial numbers of men and women in the Highlands who found Highland society almost unbearable. Prominent among these people were the individuals who transgressed the moral and religious code, for they often discovered that there was no real place for them in their local communities. Some like the two unfortunate girls named Betty McDonald and Jean Campbell in the parish of Craignish in 1761, "being under a very scandalous character and disturbers of the peace of the parish", were sentenced by the Kirk Session to be corporally punished and to be banished "the parish for ever";¹ but many men and women did not choose to wait till their local elders had had time to deliberate on their offences. Thus one Archibald Campbell, a chirurgion from Kilmartin, "never compeared to the Kirk Session" to answer an accusation made against him by a young lady, and he was accordingly listed by the Presbytery of Inveraray "as a Vagrant person and fugitive from Church Discipline".² Another offender, a certain Anne Stevenaon from Knapdale, also decided on flight, for in the Inveraray Presbytery Records in 1757 it was reported that she "had gone to the Low Country for fear of giving offence, and

1. Reg. Ho., Craignish Kirk Session Records, Minutes, Vol. 1, April 23, 1761, CH 2/401/1.

2. Reg. Ho., Presbytery of Inveraray Records, Minutes, Vol. 2, April 17, 1716, CH 2/190/2.

being an Eye sore in the Neighbourhood".¹ Sometimes, however, the respective partners in crime differed in their willingness to face their accusers, one Donald McLean of Tiree in 1782, for instance, comparing before the Session, but his accomplice, Marion McLean, preferring to take herself off to Greenock.² Some individuals, moreover, seem to have been rather unwilling to pay the fines imposed upon them, a certain Robert MacGregor, for example, resident in Greenock, being recorded in the Kirk Session Records of Strachur as owing ten shillings and eightpence.³ Nor did it always happen that the wrongdoer would migrate unaccompanied, for one "old but active man (from Harris), Ewan Macleish, a subtenant to the minister of Harris's father in law, by bribing a sailor, made his escape with a concubine and her three children (whom he had kept for years under the same roof with his lawful wife) below the hatches unknown to the captain of the vessel, safely to Greenock".⁴

Severe as these pressures from the Kirk Sessions were in the eighteenth century, they were apparently tightened very considerably in several districts of the Highlands during the nineteenth century. The Highlands experienced

1. Ibid, Vol. 3, May 8, 1757, CH 2/190/3.

2. Reg. Ho., Tiree Kirk Session Records, Minutes, Vol. 1, July 29, 1782, CH 2/482/1.

3. Reg. Ho., Strachur Kirk Session Records, Minutes, Vol. 2, May 31, 1770, CH 2/340/2.

4. Rev. J.L. Buchanan, Travels in the Western Hebrides From 1782-90 (London, 1793), p. 203.

several great revivalist movements in the first half of the nineteenth century, and in certain areas a narrower and stricter form of Presbyterianism took firm root.¹ This was frequently accompanied by an even more rigid examination of the conduct and morals of the inhabitants of the various communities, and the pressures on the wrongdoers intensified. Sage in his Memorabilia Domestica, for example, referred to the stern reproving ministers of the period, and he observed that one of them, "Mr. Pope, was a rigid disciplinarian, so much so as to induce many who had rendered themselves liable to discipline to become fugitives from it".² A steady stream of those who found themselves under the ban and disapproval of the church authorities would thus be despatched to find more agreeable environments where their sins and shortcomings would not be continually subject to public scrutiny.

The oversight by the church authorities of the lives of the inhabitants of the various Highland communities, however, seems to have been only one aspect of a more general pattern of oppressions and restrictions, for even as late as the 1780s some of the lower ranks in certain districts in the Highlands were little better than serfs. This, for example, was the position of those unfortunate men whom the Rev. J.L. Buchanan termed as scallaigs (or bond-servants)³

1. L.J. Saunders, Scottish Democracy 1815-1840, pp. 265-7.
2. D. Sage, Memorabilia Domestica (1889), p. 47.
3. Chambers Scots Dictionary, p. 477.

after his visit to the island of Harris in this period.¹ Men in such a situation often found it almost impossible to quit their master's service, for if they did, then their parents or relatives might be evicted.² So much did the youths of the island fear that they would fall into the ranks of the scallaighs that numbers of them fled from their homes. They went "on board some fishing vessel, on pretence of lending a hand for a few months in fishing", and took "the first opportunity of making their escape at Greenock, Port Glasgow, or any other port where the vessel put into".³

Another feature of many Highland communities that helped to encourage migration from the area was the rather undifferentiated nature of their social structure, for in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries "the social pattern remained everywhere the same - that of a smallholding mass in which each man engaged in the combination of activities which happened to be characteristic of the particular locality".⁴ The tackmen, it is true, had to a limited extent formed a more prosperous group in earlier times, and later the larger sheep farmers did provide an upper stratum of tenants, but in Highland society nothing resembling the richly variegated middle classes that were appearing in the

1. Buchanan, op. cit., pp. 202-3.

2. Ibid., pp. 201-2.

3. Ibid., p. 203.

4. M. Gray, The Highland Economy, 1750-1850, p. 144.

industrial towns and cities of the Lowlands was to be seen. Such a situation meant that very large numbers of Highlanders who would in another situation have risen into the middle classes, were held down among the large peasant and undifferentiated lower class in the Highlands. Since, moreover, the Highlanders were also feeling and experiencing the winds of economic change that were making men more aware of opportunities for social and economic advancement, it is reasonable to suppose that those elements in Highland society which in other circumstances would have formed the middle classes would become increasingly dissatisfied with their lot. The chiefs and the landlords, for their part, were coming to regard their lands and estates in a purely economic light,¹ and it was unlikely that the whole mass of their tenants would be content to remain in the position of small farmers or crofters ground down by excessive rents and the pressures of a tyrannical landholding system. It is interesting to speculate that the frequently observed success story of the crofter's son becoming a Professor,² Moderator or medical specialist has been the result of there being a large, concealed and frustrated middle class hidden among the mass of Highland peasants and small land holders. Right down to very recent times many Highland communities have continued to

1. Ibid. p. 57.

2. See p. 219.

display this feature of an undifferentiated class structure,¹ and many, too, have continued to witness their migrants and their descendants playing out into the various classes and ranks of society in the Lowland towns.

A further aspect of Highland society that gave a bias towards migration was the population structure that had become established in many areas by the middle of the nineteenth century. This structure was very largely the result of the considerable increase in population in the Highland area between about 1750 and 1840,² and of the failure of economic development in the Highlands to keep pace with this rise in population. The pressure of population on limited resources led to a steady migration from the area, together with sudden spurts during the periods of famine and destitution in the 1830s, 40s and 50s. Since, moreover, it was the younger members of the Highland communities who normally decided to move, there was a steady ageing of the population in several areas over the years. This was particularly noticeable after about 1840 when the population in certain parishes began to fall sharply. In Table 61 are shown the population pyramids for the island of Jura and the parish of Kilmoran for the year 1891, and these illustrate

1. F.G. Kea, A School in South Uist, Ed. J.L. Campbell, pp. xi-xii; The Third Statistical Account of Scotland, Vol. IX (Argyll), pp. 163, 374; P. Gillanders, 'The Economic Life of Gaelic Scotland Today', in The Future of the Highlands, Ed. D.C. Thomson and I. Grimble, pp. 95-149.

2. See Table 64.

dramatically the ageing of the population. Increasingly, therefore, the younger members of the Highland communities were being drained off, and this in turn meant that fewer children were being born in later years, the prospective parents having settled elsewhere.

As this process of the ageing of the population became more marked in various areas of the Highlands, certain demographic pressures were established and consolidated that maintained and encouraged further migration. The typical holding was often too small to support more than one family, and thus the sons in a family as they grew older were forced to look for alternative employment, either in their own community or in some other place. Some of the children did remain at home to assist their ageing parents on the holding, and to help support them and the family group it became customary for the children who had become migrants to send home a proportion of their earnings.¹ In this way the migration of young men and women from the Highlands became in the nineteenth century a means of maintaining the existing social and economic structure, and in a sense a vicious circle had been established. The Highland economy and population structure were such as to make migration almost inevitable, while at the same time migration helped to sustain

1. Colonel D. Stewart, Sketches of the Character, Manners, and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland, Vol. I, p. 89; The Third Statistical Account of Scotland, Vol. IX, p. 244.

that society in its existing form and indeed to intensify the trend towards an ageing population.

As the population in many Highland communities came to consist of a higher proportion of older people, inevitably these communities became less attractive to their younger members.¹ Sometimes their numbers were so small that any chance maldistribution of the sexes made the prospects for individuals finding a marriage partner in their local area increasingly remote. More and more, too, the customs, mores and outlook of such communities came to be dominated and determined by the interests of the older age groups. In many areas the older citizens settled into a neo-Celtic twilight of reminiscence and traditionalism, while the younger people became increasingly dissatisfied and moved elsewhere. Those of the migrants who could not altogether shake off their ties with the past, returned later as pensioners and rentiers to settle in the Highlands and to intensify the bias towards age, seniority and traditionalism which was helping to prevent the development of a vibrant, modern, young and progressive society.

When one surveys these various demographic and other trends in the Highland communities, it is very difficult to escape the conclusion that Highland society as it existed

1. F. Gillanders, 'The Economic Life of Gaelic Scotland Today', in The Future of the Highlands, Ed. D.C. Thomson and I. Grimbie, p. 98.

in the eighteenth century and thereafter was somehow unfitted to meet the challenge presented by all those economic changes in agriculture and industry that comprised the Agricultural and Industrial Revolutions. It might be maintained that it was the lack of economic resources that created the 'Highland problem', that it was all in fact economically and geographically determined, but there is considerable evidence to indicate that the structure of Highland society was incapable of rising to the challenge, that it was somehow designed to prevent the talent, energy and ambition of the ordinary Highlanders from expressing themselves in new developments and outlets. Nothing is perhaps more significant than the contrast between the 'indolent' Highlander of tradition in his home area,¹ and the energy and ambition displayed by the same person when transferred to the Lowland towns or cities.² This striking contrast would suggest that the whole sociological nexus of the Highland communities, the population structure, the class relations, the land tenure system, the religious outlook, the customs, conventions and beliefs of the people, and the social relationships had all combined to create a society which inhibited and restricted its members, and which was incapable of solving the problems with which it was faced.

1. See p. 264; also Reg. Ho., Records of the Board of Trustees for Fisheries, Manufactures and Improvements in Scotland, Copies of Annual Reports to the Crown, Vol. 4, pp. 52, 57-8, NG 1/7/4.

2. See Chapter 6, Tables 42-7, and pp. 294-5.

A rather similar situation seems to have existed among the communities of Highland settlers in Nova Scotia, for these emigrants, it appears, were rather tardy in introducing improvements to their land and dwelling places.¹ In Nova Scotia, it is true, the Highlanders again experienced rather difficult economic conditions, but it is more than possible that the reluctance to change arose from the social structure that had been transported there from the Highlands.

Serious as were the social problems inherent in Highland society in modern times, it was the crux of the Highland situation that over the years the Highlanders were becoming increasingly aware of more attractive and open societies in other areas, even as the pressures and tensions within their own communities were intensifying. Knowledge of conditions in the Lowlands and elsewhere was increased as the communications between the Highlands and the Lowlands improved in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and information was also spread by letters from earlier migrants,² by men and women who had settled in the Lowlands returning for holidays,³ by seasonal workers, by employers seeking labour in the Highlands,⁴ and by tourists and

1. C.W. Dunn, Highland Settler (Toronto, 1953), pp. 108-10.

2. J. Knox, A View of the British Empire, especially Scotland (London, 1785), Vol. I, pp. 127-8; see Appendix 3 for an unpublished letter from a Highland migrant in Australia.

3. D. Budge, Jura, p. 154.

4. D.F. MacDonald, Scotland's Shifting Population, p. 64; O.S.A., Vol. 15, p. 40, Vol. 20, p. 332.

their servants journeying through the Highlands. This last factor was regarded by J.J. Hecht as a crucial one in the recruiting of domestic servants for the London market from the country districts of England in the eighteenth century,¹ and there can be little doubt that many a Highland youth or girl was confirmed in his or her decision to migrate to the Lowlands by some conversation held with a servant on tour through the Highlands

Equally of importance in diffusing knowledge of conditions in the Lowlands and elsewhere, however, was the improving standard of education witnessed in some Highland districts in the nineteenth century.² This further encouraged migration from the Highlands, for as the Rev. Norman McLeod of St. Columba's Church, Glasgow,³ observed, "from the places where there are good schools, a great number of the young men come to Glasgow and Paisley to look for employment".⁴ He also claimed that in Fife the average numbers in the families were "lower in parts where schools were" since "boys who had got education had gone off".⁵ Dr. McLeod himself put forward an explanation of how the whole process operated:

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1. J.J. Hecht, The Domestic Servant Class in Eighteenth Century England (London, 1956), pp. 13-14.
 2. L.J. Saunders, Scottish Democracy, 1815-40 (Edinburgh, 1950), pp. 261-5.
 3. Dr. Norman McLeod (1783-1862), Moderator, 1836-7, Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae, Vol. 3, p. 437.
 4. Poor Law Inquiry (Scotland), 1844, P.P., 1844, Vol. XX, p. 648.
 5. Ibid.

"They learn to read books, and they learn from these that there are as fine countries in the world as the island of Tyree, and they will not submit to remain in poverty and wretchedness there."¹ Mr. Charles Baird, the Hon. Secretary of the Committee for Destitute Highlanders formed in 1836-7, expressed similar views when he observed that "Highlanders when educated become migrants. If they do not go abroad, they come to the Lowlands and get into more comfortable circumstances than in the place of their nativity."²

That the increased provision of schools in the Highlands produced a greater volume of migration from the area need not cause undue surprise, moreover, when it is recalled that by and large the education foisted upon Highland children was much more suited to life in the Lowlands than in the Highlands. On the one hand, the whole heritage of Gaelic culture, language and civilisation was, despite the work of the Gaelic Schools Societies, very largely ignored or suppressed, both before and after the introduction of state schools in 1872;³ while, on the other, the values most frequently stressed were those associated with the successful worker and entrepreneur in a commercial and industrial environment. Thus the teachers of the Church schools and the S.P.C.K.,

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., p. 659.

3. J.A. Smith, 'The Position of Gaelic and Gaelic Culture in Scottish Education', in The Future of the Highlands, Ed. D.C. Thomson and I. Grimble, pp 59-91; J.L. Campbell, Gaelic in Scottish Education and Life, pp. 40-81.

influenced perhaps by their Calvinist theology,¹ would continually underline the virtues of hard work, thrift and conscientious application as a means of securing social and occupational success,² while even in Catholic areas the same gospel was apparently spread by Catholic teachers.³ Not surprisingly those children who responded to such teaching would find that the natural ambitions which were being aroused were being frustrated in their own local environments, and thus many of them would decide to seek a more congenial climate and social atmosphere to express their aspirations.

It was not of course only considerations of occupational and social advance that caused many Highland migrants to regard the societies of the Lowlands and overseas countries as being much more attractive than their own local communities. J.J. Hecht in her investigation of domestic servants in England in the eighteenth century concluded that the whole way of life in London was a powerful magnet for country girls,⁴ and there is little doubt that the lure and glitter of the Lowland cities had a very considerable effect on many Highland youths and girls from at least the eighteenth century onwards.

1. M. Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (London, 1930); R.H. Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism (London, 1926).

2. Saunders, op. cit., p. 261; see p. 294.

3. F.G. Rea, A School in South Uist (London, 1964), pp. 81, 135-6.

4. Hecht, op. cit., pp. 13-14.

This was almost certainly an important consideration, for example with many of the migrants who moved to Greenock in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the eighteenth century the members of the Highland landed families appear to have found an attractive atmosphere and social life there, while by the early nineteenth century the town had a theatre, coffee rooms, two Assembly rooms, and numerous clubs and societies.¹ John Galt may have complained of the lack of intellectual stimulation,² but undoubtedly he was being over critical of a town which had a fair level of cultural amenities.³ The theatre in particular continued to flourish throughout the nineteenth century, and the town was visited by the leading stage companies of the day.⁴ For less sophisticated migrants, there were innumerable ale and spirit shops,⁵ and all the conviviality of a thriving seaport. They too, however, would enjoy the theatre performances, although sometimes a migrant might occasionally find the conventions rather difficult to understand. Thus one Highlander from Glasgow paying a visit to Greenock in 1853

1. D. Weir, History of the Town of Greenock (1829), pp. 36-7, 41, 94.

2. J. Galt, Autobiography, Vol. I, p. 24.

3. E. Frykman, John Galt's Scottish Stories, p. 22.

4. The Third Statistical Account of Scotland, Vol. XI, p. 190.

5. N.S.A., Vol. VII, pp. 490-1.

called at too many spirit shops in the town, and when he was making his way to the station to return home he mistakenly joined a queue for the theatre. Once inside he waited quietly for a decent interval, but then he began to demand loudly why the train had not yet started. There was general confusion, the police were called, but eventually amid great merriment his money was refunded and he was escorted to the station.¹ Such incidents were probably quite common, and would certainly add spice and excitement to the attractions of life in a town like Greenock for the migrants.

A fascinating illustration that many Highlanders were indeed finding life in the Lowland and English towns and cities rather more congenial and attractive than their own communities was given by Theodor Fontane in his descriptions of his travels through Scotland in 1858.² While he was staying in a hotel at Oban, he encountered among the other guests "a business man from Newcastle, a rather stout gentleman".³ It transpired that this guest was a Highlander from "a place called Glenmoriston, one of those valleys which debouch on to Loch Ness from the North", and that "in thirty long years (in Newcastle) he had managed to get somewhere".⁴

1. G.A., June 7, 1853.

2. Theodor Fontane, Across the Tweed, A Tour of Mid-Victorian Scotland (London, Phoenix House, 1965, translation).

3. Ibid., p. 160.

4. Ibid.

Somewhat to the surprise of Fontane, the Newcastle gentleman revealed that he had had no real desire to see his native land again, but that "he had been compelled to listen to so much talk about home-sickness and patriotism....that it had become a matter of conscience with him to yield to the pressure of his friends".¹ His visit to the Highlands, however, had been a disaster, and he bitterly regretted his weakness. "He had not been away for five days from his wife and children and had a much greater longing for Newcastle than he had ever had for Glenmoriston at any time of his life. This coast of bare basalt was unspeakably boring to him; what he liked was a cornfield with long ears of corn. As to Malcolm Canmore and Robert Bruce, he neither knew nor wanted to know anything about them. He would make a start tomorrow morning, not for Loch Ness, but for 'Canny Newcastle', where every child knew him and where he did not have to fear that he would be robbed six times a day."² Clearly much of what this migrant was saying was rationalisation, and clearly he was adopting a typical migrant's attitude of rejecting his background and exaggerating the benefits and advantages of his new environment. But certainly the views expressed by this gentleman are a healthy correction to much that has been said about the poor unfortunate Highlanders being forced to leave a land that was inexpressibly dear and well-nigh sacred

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., pp. 160-1.

to them. It is interesting to note, moreover, that the views expressed clashed violently with Fontane's own conception of the Highlands and his romantic notions of the true Highland character. "It is obvious that the Philistine flourishes everywhere," he declared regretfully. "So this was a born Highlander! A man from those very clans which we had become used to embellishing in our minds with every manly virtue and which we were used to think of as made glorious by an ineradicable patriotism!"¹ It is more than doubtful, however, if the attitudes expressed by this migrant were as uncommon as Fontane fondly imagined. Most probably they were shared by a substantial number of Highlanders who were quite glad to shake the dust and mud of the glens from off their feet to seek a new life in more congenial climes.

There is some reason to believe, moreover, that the Highlanders were being affected at a relatively early date by the assumptions shared by many people in modern Western society concerning the superiority of town and city life to country life. Dorothy Wordsworth in her tour of the Highlands encountered such attitudes in the daughter of the innkeeper at Lass. The girl during a conversation "told Coleridge with some pride that she had not spent all her time at Lass, but was then fresh from Glasgow".²

1. Ibid. p. 161.

2. D. Wordsworth, Recollections of a Tour Made in Scotland, A.D. 1803, p. 71.

Implicit in her whole tone and conversation was the assumption that somehow life in the city was superior to life in the Highlands, and that indeed something was added to the stature of a person who had lived in the metropolis. The same attitudes were apparently present among the Highland settlers in Nova Scotia, for to many of them Boston became the goal and magnet that Glasgow was to the Highlanders in Scotland.¹

"Boston became for the Maritimer a symbol of culture and wealth, and the people back home heard its glories sung so often that, overawed, they came to refer to the forty-eight states of the Union as 'the Boston States'."² Similar attitudes and assumptions concerning the superiority of life in the towns have persisted in many parts of the Highlands, and undoubtedly they have been responsible for large numbers of youths leaving their homes to earn the glamour and respect which a sojourn in the towns and cities might earn them.

The various towns and cities which acted as magnets to pull the Highlanders away from their homes would not all, however, have equal powers of attraction for the migrants, and within the Lowlands of Scotland the settlers from the Highlands were distributed quite unevenly. The Census Report for 1851, for example, showed that in that year, 46% of all the migrants from the Highland counties of Argyll, Inverness, Ross and Cromarty and Sutherland who had moved to the Lowlands were living in

1. C.W. Dunn, Highland Settler, pp. 123-7.

2. Ibid, p. 127.

either Renfrewshire or Lanarkshire.¹ Within the Clyde Region, moreover, the Highlanders did not settle in the various towns in proportionately equal numbers. Table 62 shows the percentages of the population of the towns of Greenock, Glasgow and Dumbarton made up by Highlanders from the aforementioned Highland counties in certain years between 1851 and 1961, and it is abundantly clear that the figures for Greenock in the nineteenth century were significantly higher than those for the other two towns. The percentage of Highlanders in the population of Greenock in 1871, for instance, was 8.6% as against figures of 4.0% in Glasgow and 3.9% in Dumbarton. Glasgow and Dumbarton might perhaps have had more Highland migrants from Perth, Stirling and Dumbarton, but these could hardly have brought the percentages up to that of Greenock in 1871.

Many of the factors that made Greenock especially attractive to the Highland migrants in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have been stressed in earlier sections of this investigation. These include the varied and numerous openings available in the trade, industry and commerce of the town; the vigorous social life; the presence of a Highland element from the earliest times that could ease the problems of adjustment for the newcomers; the ability of prominent citizens of Highland origin to secure positions in relatively pleasant occupations for Highland migrants; the existence of

1. M. Gray, The Highland Economy, 1750-1850, p. 255, Table IXA.

good communications from the Highlands to the town; and the fact that Greenock and the West Highlands had been to all intents and purposes integrated into one economic and sociological unit by about 1800. There seems little reason to doubt, moreover, that Greenock had a particular attraction in that for many Highlanders it was close to their former homes, and that from there they could easily keep in touch with their friends and relatives. Some writers, it is true, have claimed that once the Highlanders "were expelled from the glen that they had occupied for generations, it was of small consequence to them whether they travelled ten miles or four thousand",¹ but it is probable that this is a romantic view, linked closely to the traditional image of the Highlander with his fierce attachment to his clan and his native glen. Certain it is that some of the Highland migrants in Greenock did retain a close connection with their former homes, and indeed it was seemingly a common practice for their bodies to be sent to the Highlands for burial when they died. The Greenock Advertiser for a period in the mid-nineteenth century listed the local mortuary figures each month, and since these gave the place of burial, it was possible to calculate the numbers of persons returning to the various Argyll parishes and elsewhere in the years 1844-54 (Table 63). It is

1. J. Prebble, The Highland Clearances, p. 28; O.S.A., Vol. 4, p. 577 (Strachur).

extremely interesting to note that there is a close resemblance between the patterns shown in Table 63 for the returning deceased Highlanders, and the patterns of migration to Greenock from the Highland areas shown in Tables 15-21, with certain places such as Lochgilphead, Tarbert, Knapdale and Kilnichael Glassary again figuring prominently. The numbers of deceased Highlanders returning to their former homes for burial, moreover, was relatively high as compared with the number of persons being taken from Greenock to other places in the Lowlands of Scotland. Thus in 1849, 29 bodies were taken from the town to the Highlands, 3 to Bute, and 35 to areas in Lowland Scotland, while in 1850, 26 bodies went to the Highlands, 3 to Bute, and only 18 to areas in the Lowlands close to Greenock. Clearly, therefore, many Highlanders in Greenock still retained a close contact with and regard for their former homes, and it is reasonable to assume that this regard was a factor in their decision to settle in the town.

These various factors which made Greenock a magnet for Highland migrants continued to exert their influence over a very long period, but the figures in Table 62 also indicate that by about the end of the nineteenth century they were steadily losing their force. Thus the percentage of Highlanders in the population of Greenock fell relatively to the percentage of Highlanders in Glasgow and in Dumbarton, and indeed by 1961 only 1.3% of the population of Greenock had

been born in the four Highland counties, as against 1.6% in Glasgow and 1.2% in Dumbarton. This was perhaps due in part to the relative failure of Greenock to expand industrially to any great extent after about 1870, and also to the fact that by the late nineteenth century Greenock could not but be compared unfavourably with Glasgow as a social centre. Even more, perhaps, the change might have been brought about by an alteration in the whole pattern of communications in the Clyde/West Highland region. Right down till the second half of the nineteenth century, sea transport was the main link between the West Highlands and islands and the Lowlands, but after the construction of railways in the Highlands, the line to Oban, for example, being completed in 1880,¹ land transport came more and more to replace communications by sea. Thus such areas as Mull, Lismore, Skye, Fort William and Oban would have their ties with Greenock and the Firth of Clyde weakened and their links with Glasgow, the railway centre of the region, very much strengthened. The Dumbarton Highland areas of Arrochar, Rhu and Rosneath, too, would come to be associated much more closely with Dumbarton and Glasgow than with Greenock as rail and road transport became more important than sea transport. The areas of Cowal, Knapdale and Kintyre, however, would retain their links with Greenock rather longer, but road transport in the twentieth century

1. F.H. Groome, Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland (1882-5), Vol. V, p. 126.

also helped to bring about a change in the communications patterns of these districts.

The Highland migrants, of course, were not restricted in their choice of place in which to settle to the various towns and districts in the Lowlands, for large numbers of them sailed to overseas countries and colonies. The problem of analysing the motives which caused many Highlanders to emigrate in preference to moving to the Lowlands is not directly related to the theme of this thesis, but once again some of the findings do have a certain relevance and significance. Particularly is this so concerning the view sometimes expressed that the wealth and status of the migrants frequently affected their decision. Thus C.W. Dunn observed that "many small tenants of the Highlands and Islands.....when forced to leave their little farms, could not afford the necessary passage money (to Canada). Their only alternative was to move south and try their luck at making a living in the Lowlands."¹ D.F. MacDonald expressed similar views,² while a witness from Lismore before the Napier Commission in 1884 asserted that "those who had the means to take them to America went there, and some went to the large towns".³ This

1. C.W. Dunn, *Highland Settler*, p. 20.

2. D.F. MacDonald, Scotland's Shifting Population, 1770-1850, p. 144.

3. Report of the Royal Commission on the Conditions of Crofters and Cottars in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, 1884, P.P., 1884, Vol. XXXV, p. 2325.

factor of being able to afford the passage money, moreover, seems to have been an important element in determining the destination of the Irish migrants, whether to America, on the one hand, or to England or Scotland, on the other.¹ It is most unlikely, however, that there was in fact any real tendency for only the poorest Highlanders to move to the Lowlands. The studies outlined in Sections I and II, for example, revealed that Highlanders of various social classes were among the settlers arriving in Greenock in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Again, the contrast between the social status secured in Greenock by the Highland migrants and the Irish migrants respectively would seem to confirm the view that Highlanders of all classes were moving to Greenock. One might conclude, therefore, that various other factors such as a migrant's desire to own land² or the presence of his friends and relatives in particular localities would be of much more significance than his wealth or status in determining whether he would emigrate or whether he would move to the Lowlands.

1. J.E. Handley, The Irish in Scotland, p. 135.

2. G.A., April 2, 1805.

CHAPTER 13PUSH/PULL: PATTERN OF MOTIVATION

Hitherto the various factors that brought about the migration of people from the Highland area in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and their settlement in particular reception area in the Lowlands or overseas, have been considered separately and in relative isolation, but clearly for many of the migrants the decision to move would not be based on one factor only, but on a complex amalgam of motives. Such an amalgam of factors was seen in the life story of George Williamson of Kintyre who settled in Greenock in the early years of the nineteenth century.¹ Williamson wrote his autobiography in later life,² and this shows that his desire to obtain employment in a Lowland town offering more opportunities for advancement, the presence in Greenock of friends from Kintyre already settled there, and a visit to the town as he passed through on the way to a tour of duty with the Volunteers at Paisley, were all important factors in his quitting his apprenticeship with a writer in Campbeltown and

1. See p. 77.

2. Extracts from the Autobiography and Diary of George Williamson, 1782-1854, Ed. by His Eldest Son (Greenock, 1891).

moving to Greenock. The account gives an impression of the importance of accidental factors in, for example, the chance meeting with a potential employer in Greenock, and in his hearing news of possible openings in the town, but underneath all this, and not clearly stated or perhaps appreciated by Williamson himself, it would appear that he was much more than half decided on a move to the lowlands. The ties between Kintyre and Greenock, his connections with people already settled there, and the communications system which led to his passing through the town, were also all so much part of the general relationship between Greenock and the Highlands as to give a certain air of inevitability about his decision to settle in the town.

Nevertheless, although the decisions made by the Highland migrants to leave their homes would normally be based on a number of motives which they would find difficult to disentangle, it is obviously of some importance that the relative weight and significance of the various factors should be assessed. Particularly is this so with the vexed question of whether to allot greater priority or responsibility to the 'push' or 'pull' factors in the situation. To a very large extent, publicists and historians writing of the Highland scene have stressed the former by highlighting, for instance, the evils of the landlord system and the poverty of natural resources as being responsible for driving out the Highlanders, but such an assessment has not gone without challenge. One of

the scholars who has been particularly prominent in questioning this traditional view is Malcolm Gray. In his analysis of The Highland Economy, 1750-1850, Gray showed that though the period 1750-1850 was very largely one of increasing population for the Highland area as a whole, there were important regional variations. Thus while the South and East, an "area including the southerly parts of the county of Argyll together with the whole eastward-tilted section of the Highland plateau", was generally characterised "by very moderate increase of population", in the North West, which included "the seaboard from Morvern to Cape Wrath together with the more northerly islands, the general rate of increase was much greater - 34 per cent over the whole area".¹ These variations, Gray admitted, "may have been due partly to varying land policies on the part of the landlords",² but he was convinced that a fuller and more complete explanation was to be found, not in the "whims of landlords", but "in the spatial layout of the Highlands in relation to the more powerful economic centres of the Lowlands".³ Thus he concluded that "the rate of emigration seems to have been most affected by the degree of propinquity to the centres likely to attract labour",⁴ and that "the supreme absorptive

1. Gray, op. cit., p. 59.

2. Ibid., p. 61.

3. Ibid., p. 63.

4. Ibid., p. 65.

power of the counties with an industrial core tended to form a distinctive demographic zone of the southern and eastern Highlands".¹

There is some very considerable support for Gray's thesis in the findings discussed in various parts of this investigation. Thus the whole analysis of the occupations followed by the Highland migrants in Greenock, and the discussion of the reasons why they settled there, show overwhelmingly that many were being attracted to the town by the opportunities and by the way of life there. The exertion of the pull of the Lowland industrial centres as outlined by Gray was also illustrated in the patterns of migration to Greenock as shown in Tables 15-21. Throughout the period from the end of the eighteenth century to the end of the nineteenth century there was a clear tendency for the areas closer to Greenock to send more migrants to the town than more distant regions, and this would seem to indicate that the pull of Greenock was an important factor in the situation.

Nevertheless, it was also very apparent in the analysis of the patterns of migration to Greenock that there were certain definite, important and significant exceptions to a simple model determined by propinquity to Greenock. Thus certain areas and parishes such as Jura and Kilmodan sent a significantly higher proportion of migrants to Greenock

1. Ibid., p. 66.

than did other Highland areas and parishes closer to the town, while in almost all instances island parishes or districts sent a much greater number of settlers to Greenock than corresponding areas on the mainland. These figures, of course, merely showed the migration of peoples to Greenock, and not the general population trends in the various areas and districts. Since Gray's thesis was based on these latter trends, it was therefore decided to analyse the general movement of population for the various areas of the Highlands studied in Section I, and the results are shown in Tables 64-66. 1801 was chosen as the base year, and the populations of the areas in 1755, 1841, 1851 and 1891 are given as percentages of the numbers in that year. In Table 64 the figures for the four Highland counties of Argyll, Inverness, Ross and Cromarty and Sutherland combined are also given, and these might be taken as indicative of the general population trends for the whole Highland area throughout the period. There was thus for the Highland area as a whole a considerable rise in population between 1755 and 1801, a continuing and marked rise to 1841, a slight fall to 1851, and then a more rapid fall to 1891. At the end of the nineteenth century, however, the population was still larger than in 1755 or indeed in 1801.

For all the areas shown in Tables 64-6, the Highland counties, the Argyll Presbyteries, and the Argyll parishes, the general tendency for districts closer to the Clyde and

the Lowlands to have a smaller increase in population than the more distant regions in the period 1755-1841, and to lose population at a faster rate in the period 1841-91 is clearly evident, and all this provides further support for Gray's thesis. Nevertheless, in these general population figures, as in the figures for migration to Greenock, there are some very marked discrepancies. Thus the county of Sutherland did not fit neatly into the pattern, for it had a very much smaller rate of increase than, for example, Argyll, in the period 1755-1841. The Argyll Presbyteries, too, showed certain deviations from the patterns and trends, with the Presbyteries of Cowal and Islay registering much larger increases in population between 1801 and 1841 than more distant regions, and the population of the Presbytery of Cowal continuing to increase on to 1891. Similar trends were also shown in the Cowal parishes of Dunoon and Kilfinan where the populations also continued to rise throughout the nineteenth century to 1891. Other discrepancies occurred in the parishes of Knapdale, Kilcalmonell and Campbeltown where larger than average rises in population were registered between 1755 and 1801, in Lochgoilhead and Kilmartin where there were very considerable falls in population between 1801 and 1841, and in the parish of Kilmore and Kilbride with a very large rise between 1755 and 1801 and a continued rise on through the nineteenth century to 1891.

The general pattern of results obtained for the population trends in the various Highland areas during the years 1755-1891, therefore, was not unlike that produced for the migration of Highlanders to Greenock. In both there was a clear tendency for the districts close to the town or to the Lowlands to have a higher rate of migration or population loss, but in both there were significant exceptions to the rule. This would confirm the view that the pull of Greenock and other places in the Lowlands did exert a very considerable influence that spread out in waves over the whole Highland area, but it would also indicate that local factors and conditions could distort this pattern and impose their own population and migratory trends in particular areas. Some of these local factors and influences have been clearly established, or can be deduced with reasonable accuracy. Thus, for example, the relatively small rate of population increase for Sutherland in the period 1801-41 shown in Table 64 was no doubt caused by the large-scale evictions taking place at that time. Similarly the figures for the parish of Kilmore and Kilbride can be accounted for by the increase in the population of Oban throughout the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, while the results for Cowal and the parishes of Dunoon and Kilfinan were in large measure a consequence of the growth of the burgh of Dunoon in the nineteenth century, the

settling of large numbers of commuters on the Cowal coast, and the development of the tourist industry in the area. The substantial rates of increase for the parishes of Campbeltown, Knapdale and Kilcalmonell in the period 1755-1801, for their part, were no doubt associated with the expansion of the herring fishings in this period, and with the growth of the burghs of Campbeltown and Tarbert. This feature, if correctly interpreted, would perhaps necessitate some qualification of the conclusion drawn in Section I¹ that such burghs as Tarbert did not apparently halt population loss. Thus it would appear that in the late eighteenth century, when the fishings were prospering, they did retain the population they drew in from surrounding areas. The heavy population loss recorded by the parishes of Kilcalmonell and Knapdale in the second half of the nineteenth century, however, would accord with the migration figures from those areas to Greenock, and indicate that in the later period they were not holding population, but rather acting as collecting centres and relay stations to channel population on to such places as Greenock.

The substantiation of such observations and conclusions, however, would require very detailed studies of the areas concerned, but fortunately there are signs that scholars are

1. See pp. 91-2.

becoming increasingly interested in undertaking this type of investigation. Thus, for instance, K. Walton has studied the 'Population Changes in North East Scotland, 1696-1951',¹ while P. Gaskell in his Morvern Transformed (Cambridge, 1968) has sought to describe the changes and developments in this Argyll parish. Several articles have also appeared in The Scottish Geographical Magazine in recent years analysing population and other changes in particular Highland districts, among them 'The Island Parish of Jura' by John D. Porteous,² 'Settlement and Population in Kintyre, 1750-1800' by R.A. Gailey,³ 'The Census of Scotland as a Source in the Historical Geography of Islay' by Margaret C. Storrie,⁴ and 'Changing Form and Function of Settlement in South West Argyll, 1841-1961' by Isobel M.L. Robertson.⁵ The last named article contained some extremely interesting information concerning the numbers of craftsmen in the clachans of Mid Argyll in 1841, there being numerous carpenters, weavers, tailors, joiners and "one shoemaker to every 107 persons".⁶

1. Scottish Studies, Vol. 5 (1961), pp. 149-80.

2. The Scottish Geographical Magazine, Vol. 84 (1968), pp. 56-65.

3. Ibid., Vol. 76 (1960), pp. 99-107.

4. Ibid., Vol. 78 (1962), pp. 152-65.

5. Ibid., Vol. 83 (1967), pp. 29-45.

6. Ibid., Vol. 83 (1967), p. 31.

As further studies of this type are completed, the pattern of 'push' factors operating in various parts of the Highlands might well be discerned and plotted, even as this thesis has sought to examine and account for the 'pull' factors exerted by such a Lowland town as Greenock. There is a further element in the situation that has not always been sufficiently stressed, however, and that was the establishing over a number of years of special relations and ties between certain areas of the Highlands, on the one hand, and particular places in the Lowlands, on the other. Such ties are clearly seen in the high rates and ratios of migration to Greenock in 1851 from the parishes of Kilmichael Glassary, Knapdale, Jura and Kilmoran as contrasted with other areas closer to the Lowland town (see Table 17). Apparently these high rates were not the result of any significantly greater loss of population experienced by these districts (see Table 66), and thus one must assume that some special associations had been established between the inhabitants of these areas and Greenock.

The establishing of special links between certain districts and Greenock is revealed even more strikingly when individual parishes are compared with neighbouring areas of a rather similar population. The two Cowal parishes of Kilmoran and Inverchaolain, for example, had approximately the same population in 1755 (944; 806), and throughout the period to 1891 they experienced rather similar population

changes (Pop., 1891: 359; 351), but there was a significant difference in the numbers of migrants from the two parishes in the population of Greenock in 1851 and 1891. In 1851 there were 30 migrants from Inverchaolain in Greenock (1 in 16 of the population of the parish) as against 87 from Kilmodan (1 in 6), while in 1891 there were 14 from Inverchaolain (1 in 26) as against 36 from Kilmodan (1 in 10). Another interesting and significant contrast is to be seen in the figures for Jura in the Presbytery of Islay and for Kilmartin in the Presbytery of Inveraray. In 1801 and 1891 these two parishes had comparable population figures, with Kilmartin having 1501 and 695 in the two years respectively, and Jura 1202 and 724. In each year listed throughout the nineteenth century, moreover, Kilmartin registered a smaller increase or a greater decline in population than Jura. Nevertheless, the numbers of migrants in Greenock from Jura were very much greater than those from Kilmartin. Thus in 1851 there were 123 migrants from Jura (1 in 9) as against 39 from Kilmartin (1 in 29), and in 1891 77 from Jura (1 in 9) as against 35 from Kilmartin (1 in 20).

The special ties between such places as Jura and Kilmodan and Greenock were probably brought about by a combination of factors including good communications and the settling in the town at an early stage of large numbers of men and women from these districts. In the case of Kilmodan, it may have been that special associations were formed by large

numbers of its inhabitants participating in the buss fishings in the eighteenth century, and by the settling in Greenock of prominent men like Duncan Campbell of Glendaruel at an early stage. On the other hand, such parishes as Kilmartin and Inverchaolain, since they were also losing substantial numbers of their populations, must have been sending their peoples to other places, either in the Lowlands, in neighbouring Highland areas, or in countries overseas. Clearly this aspect of the migratory movement offers a further fruitful field of research, for if studies of the areas of pull for such places as Glasgow, Paisley, Dumbarton, Stirling, Perth etc. were carried out along the lines followed in this thesis, then a much more complete picture of the intricate pattern of Highland migration might be built up. From this pattern, and from close and detailed studies of many Highland parishes and areas, all the manifold links and special relationships between various places in the Highlands and towns in the Lowlands might emerge with greater clarity, together with the factors responsible for their origin and development.

It would appear, therefore, that the migration of peoples from the various parts of the Highlands from the eighteenth century onwards was a very complex movement, compounded of 'push' factors in the Highland environment and society, of 'pull' factors exerted from the Lowlands

and from overseas lands, and of special links and ties between particular districts in the Highlands and certain reception areas in the Lowlands or overseas. So complex indeed has been the movement that observers by and large have tended to favour one or other of the extremes, either placing responsibility on the factors inherent in the Highland situation, or alternatively on the pull of the Lowland agricultural and industrial developments. Hitherto, it would appear, more stress has been placed on the distressing aspects of the Highland experience which forced many Highlanders to leave their homes. The traditional archetype has been the pathetic figure of the migrant looking back sadly from the emigrant ship towards the distant Highland hills, but to do full justice to the movement, this figure should perhaps be accompanied by another of a keen, eager Highlander hurrying towards the bright lights of Glasgow and Greenock, his eyes fixed unblinkingly on some bright rosy dream of the future. If one can judge by the experiences of the Highlanders in one of their main reception areas (Greenock), then they were not at all a pathetic host of poor, underprivileged characters driven forth by the winds of change and modern improvements, but men who as individuals could take advantage of these changes, could help to shape and forge them, could find a profitable and comfortable niche in new environments, and could help to

would the future of their reception areas.

With these prototype figures held firmly in mind, and taking into account the various findings of this thesis and the several articles and studies discussed, one might then go on to construct a tentative model analysing the factors bringing about the movement of peoples from the Highlands. Basically this was caused by a series of economic, agricultural and social changes which were leading to a reduction in the numbers of people engaged in agriculture. These changes occurred at a time when the population was increasing rapidly, and to mop up this increase some industrial development was essential. The Highlands of Scotland, however, failed to develop an adequate economic and industrial base to sustain permanently its swollen population, and thus a movement of population out of the area inevitably followed. This failure of the Highlands to develop a modern industrial economy may have been due to geographical features such as remoteness from markets and the lack of natural resources, but equally probably it was inherent in the very fabric and nature of Highland society. Thus the whole social structure of the Highland communities was such as to restrict and circumvent the activities and ambitions of their inhabitants, and to inhibit the appearance of a real middle class in the modern industrial sense.

In isolation, Highland society under these pressures

might well have shattered and reformed in a guise capable of coping with modern developments, but in the Lowlands and elsewhere there was such an abundance of opportunities that huge numbers of the discontented, the ambitious and the energetic were attracted away from the Highlands. The importance of the Lowland escape route in particular was seen in the tendency for those Highland areas lying close to the Clyde region to experience a loss of population in greater measure and at an earlier date than the more distant regions, although in some places there were important local factors to distort this general pattern. Soon, moreover, special ties were being formed between certain Highland districts and particular reception areas, and these connections helped further to drain people away from the Highlands. At first the landlords had tried to slow down the migration of their tenants, particularly to the overseas lands, but eventually they came to encourage and even to enforce the movement as a means of solving their problems of overpopulation. The Lowlands and the overseas countries thus provided a solution to the problems of landlords and people, and a means of satisfying the aspirations of countless numbers of individual Highlanders, but for Highland society it was a disastrous if not fatal remedy. The migration of peoples from the area intensified the problems implicit in the social structure, for the very elements that might have produced

change were removed, while the reactionary features and the restricted communities were preserved and consolidated.

SECTION IV

THE IMPACT OF THE HIGHLAND MIGRANTS ON GREENOCK AND ON
LOWLAND SOCIETY

CHAPTER 14

IMPACT ON THE ECONOMY

Whatever one or other of the complex pattern of motivating factors caused particular groups of people to leave their homes in the various districts of the Highlands, there seems little reason to doubt that the movement of large numbers of people into Greenock and other towns and cities of the Lowlands throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries must have had a considerable impact on Lowland society. Rather surprisingly, however, the whole question of the specific contributions made by the Highlanders and the Highland migrants to the development of the Lowlands and of modern Scotland has been largely ignored by historians and modern commentators. Such writers as J.E. Handley¹ and J.A. Jackson² have discussed the part played by the Irish immigrants in the life and development of Scotland and of Britain in modern times, but no similar analysis of the contributions made by the Highland migrants has appeared. In the local context, A. Brown in his The Early Annals of Greenock did discuss the role played by the Highlanders in

1. J.E. Handley, The Irish in Scotland, 1798-1845; The Irish in Modern Scotland.

2. J.A. Jackson, The Irish in Britain.

the growth of Greenock, but this section of his work¹ degenerated into a list of names of prominent Highlanders and in no way sought to show what impact the influx of Highlanders had on the life and development of the community.

The ignoring of the problem of the role played by the Highlanders in the Lowland towns and cities has been partly responsible for, and has itself been partly a result of, a belief and assumption that the Highlanders and the Highland migrants in fact have made only an exceedingly small contribution to the development of modern Scotland. This view has been perhaps encouraged by the relative ease with which the Highlanders were assimilated in the Lowlands, and by the rapid disappearance of the distinctively Highland ways and customs in the Lowland communities. Thus to the superficial glance all that seemingly remains of the presence of the Highland migrants in the Lowlands are a number of streets called after Highlanders, a number of Highland surnames and Christian names, several Highland societies and choirs, and several Gaelic churches, none of which seem to have any significance for or relevance to the real life of modern Scotland. In the same way, therefore, that earlier historians considered that the Scandinavian settlements in the British Isles were of a transient and impermanent character,² so it might appear

1. Brown, op. cit., pp. 116-23.

2. G.O. Sayles, The Medieval Foundations of England (London, 1948), p. 131.

that the Highland migrants had no permanent or durable influence on Lowland culture and civilisation.

Such a conclusion would certainly receive some confirmation from a rapid survey of the present-day scene in Greenock. There, for instance, what might have been described as the unique and individual features of the Highland migrants and their life in the community have all but disappeared. Little Gaelic is spoken, the Highland societies have only relatively small numbers, and the Gaelic Parish Church is no more, having been united with the West Kirk to form The Old Kirk, Greenock.¹ Thus what were some of the essential features in the lives of the early Highland migrants in the town have practically vanished, and in the modern community of Greenock they play only a very marginal and minor role.

Nevertheless, it is clear that this assessment of the role played by the Highlanders in Greenock is a most superficial one, for a closer examination of the history of the town in the last two or three hundred years would indicate that the influence of the Highlanders in its development has been very considerable indeed. Thus, for example, there can be little doubt that the Highland migrants played a very important part in the economic development of the town. There were probably Highlanders present in Greenock from its earliest days,² and clearly the fishermen from Cowal and the

1. The Old Kirk, Nelson St., Greenock, Commemorative Plaque.

2. See pp. 54-5.

lochs of the Firth of Clyde who made their homes there would help to establish the new settlements as a viable and thriving community. In the eighteenth century, however, the influence of the Highland migrants was even more significant, for it is perhaps true to say that without their presence and contributions the economic transformation of the town and of the Clyde region might not have taken place as completely and as rapidly as it did.

One of the important factors bringing about the astonishing development of the Clyde region in the eighteenth century was the quality of commercial leadership involved. The geographical position, the opportunities opened up by the entry into the American trade, and the existence of natural resources in the area were all significant, but much more vital according to a group of modern scholars who have studied The Glasgow Region¹ was the leadership of the merchant princes who operated there. "It cannot be too strongly emphasised," they concluded, "that the 'increase and growth' which were achieved in the two centuries (eighteenth and nineteenth) owed far more to the enterprise of the people than to any combination of natural resources. This 'mercantile genius' is seen at every turn."² Among the possessors of this

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1. The Glasgow Region, Ed. R. Miller and J. Tivy (Glasgow, 1958).
 2. Ibid., J.B.S. Gilfillan and H.A. Molesley, 'Industrial and Commercial Developments to 1914', p. 187.

'mercantile genius' responsible for the growth of Glasgow and Greenock in the eighteenth century, moreover, were very large numbers of Highlanders. Many members of the landed families from Argyll and other parts of the Highlands, for instance, were active in the early enterprises connected with the commerce and trade of Greenock.¹ There were, of course, many other men involved in these enterprises who hailed from different parts of the Lowlands, but undoubtedly the Highlanders played a very important part, and without them the sheer volume of mercantile ability available could not but have been considerably diminished. Some economic purists might claim that the existence of profitable opportunities in the Clyde region in the eighteenth century would have created its own supply of merchants and mercantile talents, but if the Highlanders had somehow been debarred from participating, then these opportunities would certainly not have been seized to anything like the same extent that they actually were. Without the Highland migrants, therefore, there might well have been a slower rate of growth in the Clyde region; and since the whole pattern of the modern Scottish economy was in a sense shaped and formed by that growth, then it is clear that the contribution of the Highlanders in the economic sphere was a very considerable one.

Nowhere perhaps is the contribution made by the Highland

1. See pp. 113-14 and Tables 10-14.

merchants to the expansion of Greenock and the Clyde region more in evidence than in the herring and buss fishings. Without doubt the herring fishings were extremely important in bringing about the development of the Clyde and the Industrial Revolution in Central Scotland, for "the abundance of good quality herring in the Firth....contributed in no small measure to the prosperity of the region".¹ This was a home based industry which made possible overseas trade, providing a commodity which could be carried on outward voyages to help pay for imports from the Continent, Ireland, the Americas and the West Indies.² Considerable profits were made from overseas trade in the eighteenth century, and some percentage of these were most probably later channelled into the nascent industries of the Clyde region. Such an assessment of the importance of the fisheries and overseas trade, it is true, has not gone unchallenged by economic historians, and indeed Professor R.H. Campbell in his Scotland Since 1707 has suggested that "the influence of the merchant in the country's economic development was slight".³ This view, however, has been questioned and critically examined by W. Ferguson in his Scotland: 1689 to the Present,⁴ and in fact Professor Campbell's

1. R. Miller, 'The Geography of the Glasgow Region', in The Glasgow Region, p. 7.

2. Ibid., p. 7; H. Hamilton, An Economic History of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century, pp.264, 280, 283.

3. Op. cit., p. 78.

4. Op. cit., p. 184.

low evaluation of the importance of overseas trade is not in accord with recent work by English economic historians such as Phyllis Deane and W.A. Cole.¹ Phyllis Deane, for example, claimed that "the spectacular expansion of Liverpool and Glasgow was almost entirely a function of the foreign trade",² and she particularly stressed the importance of the trade with the West Indies.³ Since, therefore, the carrying of herring from Greenock and the Clyde to the West Indies was a very important part of the trade with these islands,⁴ and since several Highlanders and men of Highland descent in Greenock were active in that trade,⁵ then without doubt one might conclude that the Highlanders played an important part in the economic revolution in Greenock and the Clyde region.

Significant as was the role played by the Highland merchants in the economic transformation of Greenock, an equally if not more important contribution was made to the commercial and industrial development of the town in the eighteenth century by the very considerable numbers of skilled and semi-skilled workers who came from the Highlands to settle there. In Tables 26 and 27, for example, it was shown just how large were the numbers of Highlanders who worked as porters, carmen

1. P. Deane, The First Industrial Revolution (Cambridge, 1965); P. Deane and W.A. Cole, British Economic Growth, 1688-1959 (Cambridge, 1962).

2. Deane, op. cit., p. 68.

3. Ibid., p. 53.

4. Hamilton, op. cit., p. 280.

5. See Tables 10, 12, 13.

labourers, carpenters, coopers, shoemakers, tailors, weavers, and in many other trades and occupations. Later in the nineteenth century the Irish were available to supply large reserves of labour, particularly for the unskilled positions, but it is difficult to escape from the conclusion that if somehow the stream of workers from the Highlands had been cut off in the eighteenth century, then they could not have been adequately replaced. This was especially true in the shipping services, for it is very doubtful if the expansion of the merchant marine and shipping of the Clyde region could have taken place to the same extent without the existence of a large reservoir of seamen in the Highlands to man the fleets of the Clyde merchants and shipowners. That the importance of the Highland workers was not confined to this region, moreover, was indicated by Newte in 1791 when he declared that "throughout the Low Country farmers could not labour their ground without servants from the Highlands".¹

Although the supplying of manpower for local industries and enterprises was perhaps the most significant role played by the Highland migrants in the economic development of Greenock and the Clyde region, the money invested in the area by Highlanders might not have been without some considerable importance and impact. The local records contain several examples of Highlanders investing money with

1. T. Newte, Prospects and Observations on a Tour in England in England and Scotland, p. 235.

local merchants, with the Town Council for the development and construction of the town's harbours and public works, in the local banks, or in local industry.¹

Several of the Highlanders who settled in Greenock in the later eighteenth century, moreover, must have brought considerable sums of money and capital with them to the town. The pastoral nature of the Highland agricultural economy meant that although there were "few of the lower class who have the means of living nearly as well as an English labourer", many had "property of much greater value".² Thus the arrival in Greenock of large numbers of men who had realized the value of their stock must have had some impact on the local economy, while the steady sale of family property on the death of parents and relatives over the years brought further funds to the town. In 1774, for instance, Alexander Campbell, landwaiteer in Greenock, inherited the goods and property of his father, Patrick Campbell, tackman in the parish of Lochgoilhead,³ while in 1813, Agnes Campbell, wife of John Fraser, dyer in Greenock, received several hundred pounds from the estate of her deceased brother in Bute.⁴ Again in 1797,

1. See pp. 40-1, 113, and Table 10 (Archibald Campbell of Askomel).

2. T. Douglas (Earl of Selkirk), Observations on the Present State of the Highlands of Scotland, p. 44.

3. Reg. Ho., Commissariat of Argyll, Register of Testaments, Vol. 11, July 5, 1774; see pp. 83-4 and Table 13.

4. Reg. Ho., Commissariat of the Isles, Register of Testaments, Vol. 7, April 3, 1813.

Archibald Fleming, merchant in Greenock, inherited the moveables and property of his father, Daniel Fleming, merchant in Campbeltown, and this included bounties from the herring fisheries that were owing to the latter.¹ Such sums of money would not perhaps revolutionise the commerce and industries of Greenock, but cumulatively over the years they must have made some impact and some considerable contribution towards the total capital available for investment.

During the nineteenth century, the Highlands continued to supply a significant part of the labour force in Greenock, while enterprise and capital from the North still continued to flow into the town and the local economy. Nevertheless, it would appear that the role played by the Highland migrants in the economy of Greenock and the Clyde region was not then quite so important as it had been in the late eighteenth century. Alternative sources of labour, for instance, were found in Ireland and in the growth of the population of the region itself.² Highland migrants were also less prominent as entrepreneurs, for although James J. Grieve and Walter Grieve became partners in The Globe Sugar Refining Co. in 1865,³ the majority of the leading industrialists such as the Scotts

1. Reg. Ho., Commissariat of Argyll, Register of Testaments, Vol. 12, November 17, 1797.

2. See Table 33 for the percentages of local-born and Irish male workers in Greenock in 1851.

3. G. Pairrie, The Sugar Refining Families of Great Britain, p. 8.

in shipbuilding and the Kerrs, Fairries, MacFies and Lyles in sugar refining were local-born persons.¹ It would seem, therefore, that although the Highland migrants still continued to play an important part in the economy of the Clyde region in the nineteenth century, their role was not quite so crucial and vital as it had been in the late eighteenth century.

Another aspect of the Lowland economy in which the Highland migrants might have played a significant role is the manner in which it developed and the general character it assumed. Economists have sometimes made the distinction between what is termed an 'intensive' type of economy, and an 'extensive' one.² The intensive economy is one where there is a clear concentration on developing fully the resources of an area, and where there is an intensive application of economic effort to bring about growth and development in the area. In the extensive economy, on the other hand, the emphasis is on a wide-ranging commercial trade and on the opening up of new lands, areas and regions to develop and extract their natural resources. Clearly this distinction is an extremely useful one to apply to any consideration of the Scottish and British economies from the eighteenth century to the present day. In the eighteenth century, during the commercial phase of economic expansion, the emphasis was on an extensive type of economy

1. G. Fairrie, op. cit.; Two Hundred and Fifty Years of Shipbuilding by the Scotts at Greenock (Glasgow, 1961).

2. A.H. Hansen, The American Economy (New York, 1957), p. 31.

with merchants ranging far and wide to exploit the resources and wealth of large regions. Later, there was a switch to an intensive type economy as the resources of, for example, the Clyde Valley and the whole of Central Scotland were utilized intensively for industrial development.

In a deeper sense, however, one could view the Scottish economy as being overwhelmingly of an extensive type throughout the whole of the modern period. Thus to a very large extent the emphasis has been on the exploitation of the natural resources of the country to make profits that could be hurriedly consumed rather than to develop the economy and life of the community. Intensive developments there have been as in the New Town of Edinburgh, the improved farms of the Lothians, Ayrshire and the North East, the buildings and social capital of some towns and cities, and the patchy infrastructure of communications and industry, but much more the modern Scottish scene is a collection of relics from a long period of exploitation. Among these relics are the slag heaps, the derelict sites, the town and city slums, and all the other refuse of industrial Scotland, the overgrazed and devastated Highland land,¹ the denuded forests, and the overfished seas, all the result of the emphasis being placed on extracting wealth and money from the country rather

1. F. Fraser Darling, 'Ecology of Land Use in the Highlands and Islands', in The Future of the Highlands, Ed. D.C. Thomson and I. Grimble, pp. 37-49.

than on an intensive cultivation and development of its living area. The problems facing modern Scotland are in large measure those of reversing this trend, of removing the relics of the previous era, and of intensively cultivating, husbanding, developing and increasing the nation's resources instead of squandering them.

To the observant (and even to the unobservant) eye, Greenock is an excellent example and end product of the attitudes under discussion. Large areas of the town present an unprepossessing and depressing appearance, and the relics of past eras of industrialisation are all too obvious. The lack of concern for the total local environment, moreover, has been evident in the actions of generations of the more prosperous citizens who have moved to the residential West End, or to the neighbouring places such as Kilmacolm, Langbank or Gourock.¹ Clearly to such individuals, Greenock was very largely a town where they could earn a living and a competence, but it was certainly never linked with the real roots of their being. A similar phenomenon was also apparent in Glasgow, and several local historians there in the nineteenth century complained that prominent merchants and industrialists were taking up residence on the Firth of Clyde away from the city.² It is of some interest to

1. See p. 180.

2. The Old Country Houses of the Old Glasgow Gentry, Ed. J.O. Mitchell and J.G. Smith (Glasgow, 1878, Second Edition), pp. xii-xiii.

observe that a reaction to this whole trend was prominent among those Greenock Liberals who gained control of the Town Council in the 1960s. "I despise people who move out of Greenock to Kilmacollm," declared the Liberal Provost, Walter Riddell, summing up this continuing and historical movement in the town. "You must live in Greenock."¹ In a sense he was illustrating and expressing a clear determination on the part of some modern citizens to become actively involved in the town's affairs rather than to treat it as a necessary evil where money can be earned to support a real existence elsewhere.

Many factors have been responsible for the creation of those attitudes of non-involvement that have characterized places such as Greenock in modern times, and for the establishing of an extensive type economy there, but undoubtedly the fact that over the years the town has experienced the influx of very large numbers of migrants from various areas must have played a very significant part in these developments. If the American experience can be taken as a guide, then the migrant is frequently of a type who has initially little real concern for the conservation of his new environment, but is much more interested in effecting a quick and immediate exploitation of the opportunities presented to him. Without doubt, too, the representatives

1. The Scotsman, September 14, 1968.

of the Highland landed families who settled in Greenock in the eighteenth century seemed well fitted by nature to pursue extensive style economic activities. Thus they arrived in Greenock in numbers during the period when the emphasis was on overseas trade and commerce, but left it for fresh pastures at home and abroad when the tone and character of the town began to change. Highland migrants of other ranks, too, seemingly shared the footloose character of the landed families, and the pattern of migration examined in Section I indicated that very large numbers of them later left the town to emigrate or to settle elsewhere in the British Isles. Some of the Highland migrants to Greenock, including the local historians, did attempt to develop a local patriotism, but the evidence suggests that the majority never really sank deep roots there. It would of course be idle to claim that only the Highland migrants regarded Greenock in this light, for undoubtedly the Irish and other groups displayed the same attitudes. Nevertheless, the extent to which the Highlanders and their descendants entered into the spirit of the commercial and economic ethos of the town as evidenced by their significant rise in social status would suggest that they possessed the typical attitudes in a very high degree. Perhaps it was that they were more attached to their original homes in the Highlands, as many observers had claimed,¹ and that once they had been separated from them

1. J. Smith, General View of the Agriculture of the County of Argyle (Edinburgh, 1798), p. 172.

they were less likely to form strong attachments for Greenock or other lowland towns. If this were so, then clearly they played their full part in developing all those attitudes and outlooks concerning their environments that have been so typical of the modern Scot almost to the present day.

CHAPTER 15IMPACT ON SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY LIFE

In addition to their contributions to the economic development of Greenock, the Highland migrants also had some considerable influence in several other spheres of life in the community. The studies outlined in Section II showed that they participated fully in the whole communal life of the town, and unquestionably they must have coloured and influenced all these various activities. In some fields such as politics and the development of trade unionism, however, it is sometimes difficult to detect any specifically Highland contribution. Here the basic patterns and structure came from the local and lowland environment, and any impact made by the migrants lay most probably in determining attitudes among the participants rather in creating any new organisations or policies. In such situations, therefore, one cannot really make any legitimate claims concerning the contributions made by the Highlanders, but needless to say their impact might in fact have been quite considerable in its effect on men's attitudes towards local problems and conditions in these fields.

In the same way, too, the Highland migrants might well have influenced the outlook, habits and attitude to life of

the general population in the town, for with such a substantial part of the existing population having some Highland ancestry, it seems most probable that certain of the ways, habits and characteristics of the local people must have had their origin in the old Highland communities. Particularly is this so with that dislike of affectation and humbug, and that lack of tolerance of anything or anyone out of the ordinary which are outstanding characteristics of the modern population in Greenock and the Clyde-side area.¹

It is not perhaps too fanciful to see in these qualities of character some Highland influence, for in many of the former Highland communities the pressures towards conformity were particularly severe and any person who did not conform to the accepted ways and standards was subjected to severe criticisms. When the Highlanders moved to Greenock, it is more than probable that they took their habits of mind with them, and that these were there consolidated into the mores and outlook of the local community. Migrants from other areas would of course bring with them rather similar outlooks, and indeed the tradition of debunking pretentiousness and officiousness was a strong one in Scottish life, vernacular poetry and literature.² Nevertheless, since the Highlands

1. The Third Statistical Account of Scotland, Vol. XI, p. 217 (Port Glasgow); Colm Brogan, The Glasgow Story (London, 1952), pp. 52-3; observations by the present researcher over many years in the town of Greenock.

2. D. Craig, Scottish Literature and the Scottish People 1680-1830, pp. 72-110.

retained a social system with a largely undifferentiated class structure among its lower orders till a much later date than other parts of Scotland, then it is probable that the Highlanders arriving in Greenock would possess these attitudes to a greater degree than most other migrants. Almost certainly, however, the attitudes of the migrants from the rural areas of Ireland would resemble those of the Highlanders, and thus these various attitudes and characteristics would be further consolidated in the population of the town.

Another feature of life in the old Highlands which might have affected the attitudes of the inhabitants of Greenock was the position of the male in families. Among the Highlanders the male head of the household had a very considerable authority, and there were a large number of tasks and duties he considered beneath his dignity. Thomas Newte in 1791, for instance, declared that "even at this day, there is nothing that appears to a Highlander, when he comes to the Low Country, so unnatural and unmanly, as to see a man milking a cow".¹ Similar attitudes have clearly been in evidence in Greenock and the Clyde region over the years, and husbands have felt entitled to certain prerogatives concerning entertainments and leisure time activities which were not to be shared by their womenfolk.²

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1. Newte, op. cit., p. 272; see also Mrs. A. Grant, Letters from the Mountains (London, 1809, Fourth Edition), Vol. II, pp. 123-4.
 2. The Third Statistical Account of Scotland, Vol. V, pp. 768-9; Colm Brogan, The Glasgow Story, pp. 55-6; James H. Muir, Glasgow in 1901 (Glasgow, 1901), pp. 188-99.

It is true, of course, that the Irish immigrants in the Clyde region also displayed these attitudes to a very considerable degree,¹ and that indeed they were a feature of working class societies in many industrial towns throughout Britain in modern times,² but nevertheless, one can be reasonably certain that the Highland migrants did contribute something to their full development in Greenock.

Several of the characteristics traditionally associated with the Highlanders, therefore, have had their counterparts among the population of Greenock, but clearly it is very difficult to show any one to one relationship between them. Undoubtedly the Highland migrants would often retain their individual characteristics when they settled in Greenock, and many of them indeed would help to channel their attitudes and outlooks into the general stream of the local culture by passing them on to their children. However, since migrants from other areas might often have had rather similar attitudes and characteristics, it is extremely difficult to disentangle those features that were peculiar to the Highlanders. Without doubt they did contribute much to the amalgam of qualities and attitudes that characterise the modern population of Greenock, but the process of forming

1. The Third Statistical Account of Scotland, Vol. V, pp. 768-9.

2. G. Rose, The Working Class (London, 1968), pp. 55-6, 71-3;
R. Hoggart, The Uses of Literacy (London, 1957), pp. 53-8.

that amalgam has been so complex that the web cannot be fully unwoven to reveal the exact contribution, influence and impact of the Highland migrants.

In addition to the various personal qualities and attitudes that they might possibly have helped to produce in the population of Greenock, the Highland migrants also made significant contributions to the customs, culture and general way of life of the community. One such contribution that has received great publicity and which has been particularly stressed in some of the traditional accounts was the introduction of whisky drinking on a substantial scale. Thus the Greenock writer, T.W. Hamilton, declared in 1947 that the "Highlanders brought with them a love of whisky to a community who drank their ale in comparative sobriety".¹ The same view was expressed equally forcefully in the nineteenth century by the local historian, D. Campbell. Writing in 1879, he asserted that "the introduction of whisky was comparatively unknown in Greenock until after the rebellion was finally crushed at Culloden. Government resolved to prevent further risings of the Highlanders by lessening the power of the chiefs, and this they sought to do by abolishing hereditary jurisdictions. As a consequence the Highlanders crowded into the large towns for employment and the rising port of Greenock was quite inundated with them.

1. T.W. Hamilton, How Greenock Grew, p. 14.

As was to be expected, they, along with the Gaelic, introduced usages of a more questionable character, and among such was the drinking of whisky. Being accustomed in the Highlands to this liquor which they called Usquebagh, and being of opinion that it was a medicine that cured all the ills of life, the demand soon created supply, and speedily small public houses, the patronymic of whose owners unhesitatingly betrayed their origin, began to supplant the alehouses..... For many years the chief retailers of this liquor in Greenock were Highlanders, and as a consequence their countrymen suffered more from the curse of drink than the other inhabitants."¹

Without doubt the drinking of whisky was particularly associated with the Highlands as Campbell claimed, but it is clear that he was interpreting the part played by the Highland migrants in making it a common drink in Lowland Scotland in rather crude terms. Although of Highland descent,² he seems to have adopted a very prejudiced attitude towards the Highlanders and to have accepted uncritically many of the traditional stories about them. Not surprisingly, therefore, A. Brown, the later local historian and Highland apologist, found it relatively easy to prove that Campbell had overstated his case and to show that the imposition of a malt tax in 1724 had also been an important factor in bringing about an increase in whisky

1. D. Campbell, Historical Sketches of the Town and Harbour of Greenock. Vol. I. pp. 203-4.

2. See p. 246.

drinking in the town.¹ Brown himself, however, went to the opposite extreme in his desire to rehabilitate the reputation of the Highlanders when he declared that the habit of drinking whisky displayed by the people of Greenock "was not due to any influence that the Highlanders would exercise over them".² His attempt, moreover, to refute Campbell's claim that a large number of the spirit retailers in the town were Highlanders was based on rather flimsy evidence³ and does not accord with the figures given in Table 35. These figures showed that the Highland migrants were indeed prominent as spirit retailers in the nineteenth century, and this fact together with the frequent references in the local newspapers to the smuggling of whisky from the Highlands to the Clyde area⁴ would indicate that the Highlanders did in fact fill a significant role in this field. They were by no means solely responsible for the development of whisky drinking in Lowland Scotland, but they certainly played an important part in making the drinking of it much more common among large numbers of the inhabitants of the Lowland towns. Without doubt, too, this remained a permanent and enduring influence on Lowland and Scottish life, until at least, that is, modern penal taxation did something to alter established patterns!

Another aspect of the local scene in Greenock where the

1. A. Brown, The Early Annals of Greenock, pp. 118-19.

2. Ibid. p. 119.

3. Ibid. pp. 119-20.

4. See pp. 39-40.

Highland migrants were blamed for creating and intensifying social evils was the bad housing and slum conditions existing in the town over such a long period in modern times. T.W. Hamilton was again critical of the Highlanders in this respect, asserting that they introduced and perpetuated low standards of housing in the town. "They came from 'the lone shieling of the misty island'," he declared, "which sounds fine in poetry; they came from the hovels of the glens and congested townships. They were ignorant, many of them were lazy, their standards of life were very low. They were dirty and verminous.....But what effect had this on the housing of the people of Greenock? It had a disastrous effect, and seeds were sown which produced a deadly crop which we are still reaping.....Low standards of housing had to be accepted, and gradually became the normal condition of very large sections of the people. The tradition of low rents was established which has been a major hindrance to the proper housing of the people. It is nearly two hundred years since these things happened, yet there are still many in our midst with this mentality of the slum atmosphere which persists in spite of new environment."¹ In Hamilton's view, moreover, the habits and sloth of the Highlanders, which had brought poor housing and degradation to the town, contrasted with the virtues of the "stalwart men of Strathgryfe" (in Renfrewshire),

1. Hamilton, op. cit., p. 14.

of Ayrshire, and of other parts of the Lowlands, who, with "their grit and perseverance, their endurance and capacity and their enterprise laid the foundation on which so much that was worthy and enduring was later built".¹

Although there is most probably a certain amount of truth in Hamilton's accusations, he clearly concentrated too much on the failings of the incomers, and not enough on the ghastly and overcrowded conditions existing in Greenock and other Lowland towns in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which were transforming many of the inhabitants into slum dwellers. His one-sided approach contrasts markedly with the excellent assessment of the varying degrees of responsibility for creating slums in Glasgow as shared by the migrants and the environment respectively given by Professor R. Miller in his description of 'The Geography of the Glasgow Region'.² Professor Miller produced the startling information that the Glasgow tenements had "concentrated people at a density up to 700 to the acre (almost the same as in a graveyard), which could only be endured by those trained to such highly urban conditions. Centuries of experience permit close urban living in the ancient towns and cities of the Mediterranean and of the Low Countries, but the

1. Ibid, pp. 14-15.

2. R. Miller, 'The Geography of the Glasgow Region', in The Glasgow Region, Ed. R. Miller and J. Tivy, pp. 1-16.

immigrants to the new towns of Glasgow and the West were mostly from the outer fringe of Atlantic Britain and had no such experience. They had been up-rooted from their own culture,and....at the best, they made a poor show of urban living, and in bad times, when unemployment brought poverty, it would scarcely be an exaggeration to say that civilisation as we know it collapsed."¹

The Highland migrants, for their part, all too obviously lacked that sophisticated training in urban living that might have prepared them for their new environments and enabled them to overcome the grim conditions so many of them were to face in the Lowland industrial towns. Accustomed as they were to living in small clachans or hamlets in relatively scattered communities, with waste and sewage disposal a matter of walking to the nearest gully or loch, they would not be at all ready for community living in towns, and many of them must indeed have quickly lapsed into the careless ways of slum dwellers. Nevertheless, the Highland migrants did not differ to any significant extent in this respect from the migrants from other parts of Scotland or from Ireland, for the majority were from rural areas and would be equally inexperienced in urban living. Most of the migrants arriving in Greenock in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries would therefore experience the same difficulties in altering

1. Ibid. p. 12.

their ways and habits to adapt to town and community living, and among all the migrant groups there would be individuals who made successful adjustments, and others who failed to rise above their new environments. There is, moreover, no evidence to suggest that the Highland migrants had proportionately more failures than any of the other groups in the town, and indeed the marked rise in social status secured by the second generation Highlanders in Greenock¹ would perhaps suggest that a goodly number of them were overcoming the problems and difficulties that faced them.

In the related fields of health and crime, too, there is no evidence to suggest that the Highland migrants had any significantly greater impact and influence on developments in Greenock than any other migrant group. The studies in Section II provided no details to indicate that the Highlanders were any more prone to criminal activities than the general population, and certainly it would be a most fanciful thesis to blame them exclusively for any rowdiness or disorders that affected the town's population. Similarly the examination of the major diseases afflicting the inhabitants of Greenock in the mid-nineteenth century shown in Table 49 revealed no significant tendency for the Highlanders to contract any particular illness. They were indeed very vulnerable to small pox, but since this was most probably a

1. See Tables 46 and 47.

result of their unwillingness to accept vaccination, there is clearly no question of any racial defect involved. Thus as far as the major afflictions are concerned, one can be reasonably certain that the Highland migrants did not introduce into the racial composition of the population of Greenock any weakness or tendency to contract a specific disease or group of diseases. The environment of the town, together with its sanitary and housing conditions, were more than adequate to account for whatever diseases and epidemics that occurred, without venturing into tendentious and fanciful theories of constitutional weaknesses for explanations.

Nevertheless, it must be admitted that our knowledge of this aspect of human affairs is by no means extensive, and that further research could well show that there were and are indeed differences in the physical make-up of different groups and in their resistance to particular diseases. Some interesting facts, for instance, emerge from a study of the incidence of blindness among Highlanders and other groups in Scotland in the nineteenth century. Tables 67 and 68 give the figures for the incidence of blindness in several of the counties of Scotland in 1851 and 1891 respectively, and from the results it can be readily observed that the Highland counties of Argyll, Inverness, Ross and Cromarty and Sutherland, together with the northern counties of Caithness and Orkney and Shetland had much higher rates than the counties in the Lowlands. Thus, for example, the

figures for Ross and Cromarty in 1891 at a rate of 1 blind person for every 608 persons in the population contrasted markedly with those for Ayr at a rate of 1 in 2115 and for Selkirk at 1 in 3908. The Highland migrants in Greenock, too, seem to have been equally prone to suffer from this affliction, their rates in 1851 being 1 in 589 persons, and in 1891 1 in 544. Expressed in a different form, this meant that in 1851, 19.4% of the blind persons in Greenock had been born in the Highlands, as against a norm for Highlanders there of 11.0%, while in 1891 21.2% of the blind were Highland-born as against a norm of 6.0%. The total numbers of blind people involved in both years were very small, being 36 in 1851 and 33 in 1891, but the figures do suggest that some factor was making the Highlanders, both in Greenock and in the Highland areas, more liable to become blind than the members of other groups in Greenock or the generality of the population in the Lowland counties.

The interesting possibility emerges, moreover, that the apparent vulnerability of the Highlanders to this affliction might have had some effect on the population of Greenock. Table 69 gives the figures for the incidence of blindness in 1960, 1961 and 1962 in the major towns and cities of Scotland, and here it would appear that Greenock had a rather high rate. Only Edinburgh, Kirkcaldy and Dundee had consistently higher

rates, and the figures for Edinburgh might well have been inflated by the presence there of institutions for the blind. Clearly the numbers involved are too small, and the possible causative factors explaining such results all too numerous and varied to justify anything other than tentative and speculative conclusions, but certainly this whole subject would warrant more detailed and extensive research. Investigations into this field and into the related subject of blood groupings and blood counts might produce some concrete information concerning any special and unique characteristics possessed by the Highland migrants which they might have contributed to the general make-up of the present population of Greenock.

Another field where further research might prove interesting and instructive is in the analysis of the local dialect and of the influence of the Highland migrants on the local patterns of speech. At first glance this does not appear to have been very great, even although one might have expected that the large numbers of Highlanders arriving in the town with their own language and even their own manner of speaking English would have had some important influence on the Greenock dialect. It is extremely difficult to isolate any words or phrases which could have been introduced by the Highlanders or to detect any Highland forms of speech in the local dialect. The names of Greenock and Gourrock, as well as other places and landmarks in the locality, seem to

have had Gaelic origins,¹ but these names were apparently given at a very early period in the town's history. All of this would perhaps indicate that the Highlanders in Greenock tended to keep their two languages quite distinct and separate, and that in their speaking of English they conformed to the modes and patterns they encountered in the local area. This conclusion, it is true, might be based on lack of real evidence, and a detailed study of the dialect might well show some important Highland influences; but until such a study produces concrete results, then one must assume that the Highland migrants had only a marginal effect on the language and dialect of Greenock and the surrounding area.

If the Highland migrants did not add very many of their words or idioms to the local language and dialect, they did, however, contribute certain of their games and sports to the life of the local community. Thus for a period in the nineteenth century there was a thriving Celtic Shinty Club in Greenock, and each New Year's Day a game and competition were organised that attracted large crowds.² That the game was relatively popular and widespread in the town is indicated, moreover, by the appearance from time to

1. W.J. Watson, The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1926), p. 201; J.B. Johnston, Place-Names of Scotland (London, 1934), pp. 195, 197.

2. See p. 257.

time in the Greenock Advertiser of complaints that the "reprehensible practice of 'shinty' playing in the streets has again commenced among us".¹ Other popular sports and pastimes which were introduced partly by the Highlanders were Highland Games and Highland Dancing. After the forming of the Volunteers in 1859, for example, Celtic Games were held annually,² and Highland style games and competitions have continued with fluctuating popularity right down to the present day. Nevertheless, it seems clear that these specifically Highland sports did not have a permanent and all-embracing influence on the life of the community in Greenock. As in other parts of the Lowlands, the dominant sports and games throughout the modern period have been soccer, cricket, and rugby, games for which the Highlanders can in no way be held responsible. Shinty-playing, moreover, soon died out in the town, while Highland Games and Dancing had only a marginal and peripheral interest for the majority of the town's population.

Rather more enduring, however, has been the influence of the Highland migrants in Greenock on the holiday and summer leisure time habits of the town's inhabitants. In Section I it was seen how the ties and associations between Greenock and the West Highlands had become increasingly close over the

1. G.A., December 18, 1855.

2. See p. 240.

centuries, but clearly these ties must have been immensely strengthened by the settling in the town of large numbers of men and women from Argyll and the Western Islands. Many of these people had relatives remaining in the Highlands, and considerable numbers of them retained their connections over a long period by visiting their former homes on holidays.¹ From an early date, too, many of the local citizens began to acquire holiday homes on the Firth of Clyde. In 1787, for instance, a certain Captain James Parker, Port Glasgow, wrote to a friend in London stating that he had "been over in the highlands for a week with Captain Blair we staid with Mr. James Anderson who has a very pleasant summer residence on the Gare Laugh, where we passed our time very agreeably".² This practice was continued and expanded throughout the nineteenth century,³ and thus it was that the people of Greenock looked out on the whole of southern Argyll as an area known and familiar to them. Well might the children of the town chant in their street songs: "Kirn, Dunoon, Innellan, Rothesay," for the magic of these and other place names such as Tighnabruaich, Strachur, Ardentinny, Arrochar, Ardlui, Inveraray, Ardrishaig and Glendaruel are all an essential part of their folk culture. Even in these modern days of foreign travel, there would be steady streams of people

1. D. Budge, Jura, pp. 154-5.

2. National Library, Stuart Papers, Ms. 5035, f. 72, October 5, 1787.

3. See p. 86.

heading out of the town in the summer months in the direction of the West Highlands to renew the ties forged over the generations by their families.

In the more general cultural life of the community in Greenock, too, the contributions made by the Highland migrants would appear to have been very substantial. Their Highland societies and choirs, for example, though not perhaps attracting a majority of the Highlanders in the town,¹ have been a feature of the local scene in Greenock over a considerable period. At the present time, the Highland and Gaelic societies and choirs, with their membership of Highlanders, descendants of Highlanders, and Lowlanders alike, form an important part in the cultural life of the town.² The inflow of Highland migrants is much reduced from that of earlier years, but some aspects of Gaelic culture still continue to have a real appeal among a considerable section of the community. Such a situation indeed obtains in many of the towns and cities of the Lowlands, and a flourishing Gaelic social life is entrenched, albeit on a narrow front, in many areas.

The influence of the Highland migrants in Greenock, however, has not been confined to the purely Gaelic and Highland societies, for without doubt it has spilled over

1. See pp. 258-60.

2. The Third Statistical Account of Scotland, Vol. XI. p. 191.

into the general social and cultural life of the town. Over the years a flourishing cultural tradition has been developed in Greenock, a tradition which is expressed in modern times in a thriving Arts Guild centre, a successful orchestral society, several active and prominent drama societies, and a number of excellent choirs.¹ The choral tradition in the town is particularly noteworthy, with local choirs frequently scoring successes at Mods, festivals and in national competitions.² It is tempting to see, too, in this choral tradition an element of Highland influence, for over the years of Highland settlement in the town, the Highlanders have indeed placed considerable emphasis on singing. Many of the members of the Gaelic Choirs, moreover, have also joined other choral groups, and numbers of people in the town have clearly been brought into a wider cultural life through the Highland societies. It would certainly be quite misleading to trace every interest and development in choral singing and other art forms back to the Highland influence and the Highland migrants, but undoubtedly the Highlanders with their love of music and the emphasis on story and song in their traditional Gaelic background could not but have had some effect on the choral and cultural life of Greenock.

1. Ibid., pp. 120, 190-1.

2. Ibid., p. 191.

The Highland migrants in Greenock may also have had some important influence on the religious life of the town. Many of them, it is true, abandoned church membership and conformed to a general working class pattern in Greenock,¹ but others brought with them strong views and attitudes, and undoubtedly they contributed to the Evangelical and Free Church tradition in the town in the nineteenth century.² It is probable, moreover, that the Highlanders helped to consolidate and extend the strict observance of the Sabbath in Greenock and other parts of the Lowlands.³ In the nineteenth century, many of the Highland migrants would hail from areas where Sabbath Observance remained more firmly rooted and entrenched than in other parts of Scotland,⁴ and thus they would help to swell the tide of Sabbatarianism in the Lowland towns. In Greenock this influence would be particularly effective among the middle classes, many of whom were of Highland descent and also members of the Free Church Congregations.

Important as was the influence of the Highland migrants on the cultural and religious life of Greenock, they clearly made a very much greater impact on the Volunteer Movement in the town. Their influence in this sphere, however,

1. See pp. 202-4.

2. See pp. 204-7.

3. W. Notestein, The Scot in History, p. 304.

4. L.J. Saunders, Scottish Democracy, 1815-40, pp. 261-7.

did not come from the actual numbers of Highlanders joining the various Corps, for although there was a ready response from Highlanders in the late 1850s and they formed their own unit, it is unlikely that they predominated to any considerable extent in the whole movement. What was of real and particular significance was the fact that over the years the Highlanders in the Volunteers added a Highland character and tone to the local units. After Cardwell's Army Reforms, for example, the Greenock Volunteers were linked with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, the territorial regiment of the district.¹ Colonel William Lamont, a later Commandant of the Greenock Volunteers, aptly summed up the change by writing that "the little leaven of the two Highland companies by and by leavened the whole lump of the battalion till they paraded 1,000 strong in the handsome uniform of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders".² The Highland appearance of the unit and the Highland tradition were carefully cultivated throughout the remainder of the century, a climax perhaps being reached when the battalion, all in the kilts of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, paraded on 6th June, 1900, to celebrate Pretoria Day. "Never was there such a muster of kilted Volunteers in Greenock," declared Colonel Lamont, "and a perfervid Gael assures us that so enamoured was Nature

1. Colonel W. Lamont, Volunteer Memories, p. 88.

2. Ibid., p. 29.

of the scene that the setting sun flung his benediction from beyond the Argyllshire Hills. It looked of a truth as if the whirligig of time had brought to Greenock a genuine Celtic Renaissance. 'Fasaidh an son bheag na mile,' which being interpreted means, 'A little one shall become a thousand.'¹ It should be perhaps noted, moreover, that Colonel Lamont, although himself having a Highland name, was by no means a complete enthusiast for things Highland. Initially in his book he seemed to speak with some amusement about the deeds of Collector Campbell,² and he always referred to the Highland Corps as a quite distinct unit.³ Later in his writings about the Volunteers, however, it is as if, despite himself, he had been so carried away by the general enthusiasm for the Highland associations of the local units that he was ready and proud to call all of their members 'Highlanders'.⁴

Clearly, therefore, in this particular sphere, the Highland influence in dress and tradition became more and more dominant until the people of Greenock came to look on their Volunteer and later their Territorial units as being part of a Highland regiment. All the rignarole and pageantry that

1. Ibid., p. 132.

2. Ibid., pp. 28-9.

3. Ibid., pp. 28-9.

4. Ibid., p. 147.

came to be associated with the Highland regiments, the kilts, trews, pipe bands and tartan, all became essential features of the Greenock Volunteers and later the Territorials, and here in effect the Highlanders imposed their ways and customs on the rest of the population. Thus by the twentieth century, youths of local, Irish, Lowland and English origins, as well as Highlanders, were ready, eager and proud to serve in a Territorial unit that was officially recognised as Highland. In a sense, therefore, the Volunteers and Territorials became living testimonials to the power and ability of the Highland migrants to influence the community and to introduce their traditions in at least one limited field of the community life in Greenock.

CHAPTER 16THE HIGHLAND MIGRANTS AND THE POPULATION OF MODERN SCOTLAND

Another important aspect of the settling of a large number of Highlanders in Greenock and other towns and districts of the Lowlands is the part played by this process in the creation of the modern population of Scotland. In effect what has been taking place in the towns and cities of the Lowlands has been a mingling of groups and races over a period since the eighteenth century. Among these groups have been the original inhabitants of the Lowland area, the Highlanders and the Irish, together with some migrants from England and overseas, very largely in fact those groups studied in Greenock in Section II and outlined in Table 33. In Greenock the Celtic element has been particularly prominent with the presence there of large numbers of Highland and Irish settlers,¹ but even although other towns and districts have had rather different balances in the composition of their populations, all have experienced a similar process of mixing and mingling of different groups of peoples.

In the main, this mingling process that has been such a prominent feature of Lowland Scotland in the modern era

1. See Tables 8, 33, 34, 54; Census Reports, 1851-1961.

has been taking place in a new industrial and rapidly evolving environment, and it would therefore be quite logical to assume that a rather different type of Scot might appear. So complex has been the whole process of evolution, however, that scholars and observers have seemingly found it well nigh impossible to analyse, understand and interpret it. This has been apparent, for example, in the almost complete dearth of any literary work of significance in the modern period dealing with the working class populations of the Lowland towns. The industrial worker in Lowland Scotland has more often than not been represented either as the comic, drunken figure so beloved by Scottish comedians, or as an insipid cardboard character wandering aimlessly through the streets of Glasgow, but of real insight into the lives lived by people in the industrial towns of modern Scotland there has been precious little.

In part this failure of imaginative insight has been a consequence following upon the Union of "the split between the standpoint of the cultivated Scotman and the mass of life in his country"¹ which David Craig so convincingly portrayed in his study of Scottish Literature and the Scottish People, 1680-1830. Both Craig and Professor Daiches in The Paradox of Scottish Culture have shown how Scottish

1. D. Craig, Scottish Literature and the Scottish People, 1680-1830 (London, 1961), p. 49.

literary output after the Union came to be unrepresentative of much that was going on in the nation, and how indeed "the upper classes in effect disowned a great deal of what went on in their own country".¹ On the one hand, there was the Anglicised culture of the educated intelligentsia and the literati who more and more adopted English forms and standards, while, on the other, there was a popular culture, represented perhaps by dialect poetry and the folk song,² and later by the kailyard tradition. Any works relating to the lower orders of society tended, like those of Burns, to be based on the older traditions of the soil and country life, but the communities living in the new industrial towns were rarely accurately or effectively depicted. It was as if a barrier had been drawn between the Scottish literati and the life that was going on in the working class districts of the Lowland industrial towns and cities.

In Greenock in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there was evident the same pattern of literary production and failure to portray the lives of the lower ranks of society in the town. In the early nineteenth century a writer of some merit appeared in the person of John Galt, but he, too, failed to break through the barriers to write convincingly of the lower orders of society around

1. Craig, op. cit., p. 63.

2. D. Daiches, The Paradox of Scottish Culture (London, 1964), pp. 20-35.

him. Galt did, it is said, reveal a "sensitive awareness of contemporary social and economic changes",¹ but he seemed much more at home with rural characters, and even in his novel of urban life, The Provost, he portrayed the middle class traders much more convincingly than the lower orders. He was not really sympathetic towards working people in the towns, and his image of them corresponded to the common stereotypes held by the upper classes of the day.² In his attitude towards his whole environment in Greenock, too, Galt exemplified the failure of the Scottish literati to draw their strength and inspiration from the community life around them, for he felt superior to the inhabitants of the town³ and himself declared: "I was never there in my element; something of constraint environed me."⁴ As an emigre, moreover, "he had had to Anglicise to get on", and he was thus even more "artificially distanced from the sources of his own experience".⁵

Later in the twentieth century, another local writer, George Blake, began to write novels describing life in the town and on Clydeside, and without doubt some of these had

1. K. Wittig, The Scottish Tradition in Literature, p. 252.

2. E. Frykman, John Galt's Scottish Stories, p. 202.

3. Ibid., pp. 22, 38.

4. J. Galt, Autobiography, Vol. I, p. 23.

5. Craig, op. cit., p. 261.

real literary merit. Thus according to Dr. Wittig, Blake in The Shipbuilders dealt effectively with the question here under discussion, and tried "to get beneath the surface to answer modern Scotland's besetting problem: 'What are we?'"¹ Wittig claimed, moreover, that this novel attempted to "spotlight the difference between Scots and English, and emphasises the contrast between the outward decency, and respectability of the Anglified upper middle class and the crude vehemence of the passions expressed by the explosive consonants of native Scots speech".² Nevertheless, it is extremely doubtful if Blake in fact succeeded in delineating the contrast between the middle classes and the Clydeside workers, for whereas his middle class characters were real and life-like, his working class characters were cardboard figures with little resemblance to the true shipyard worker on Clydeside.

This failure of the literati and the educated classes to understand the working classes in the industrial towns that has been such a feature of the modern literary scene, is a result partly of class barriers in our industrial society, and partly of the cultural split brought about by the Union and increasing association with England as analysed by David Craig and Professor Daiches. The thesis is advanced here,

1. Wittig, op. cit., pp. 323-4.

2. Ibid., p. 324.

however, that it was also partly a consequence of the fact that the mingling of groups and races that was taking place in the industrial towns was producing a new type of Scot whose complex and evolving character was defying analysis and comprehension. Since the middle and educated classes were more involved in the Anglicising process and were thus to a certain extent cut off from this experience, the writers and artists among them found it easier to produce the stereotypes and comic figures rather than to wrestle with the complex and infinitely varied reality. The educated working classes, for their part, were often too concerned with their efforts to cut loose from their background and to acquire the accepted and polite culture to examine their own experiences in the industrial environment.

One of the intriguing possibilities to emerge from any close study of the Scots living in the industrial towns is that perhaps the mingling of the groups and the evolution of a new type of character has perhaps reached a critical stage. This is most clearly seen in the relative assimilation of the Irish in the community, their roots now apparently being more firmly fixed in Scotland than in their former homeland. A colourful illustration of the partial assimilation of the Irish immigrants and their descendants, for example, occurred in the sphere of Association Football in 1967, when the sight, seen all over Europe on T.V., of Celtic supporters at Lisbon in the ecstasy of their

joy waving shamrocks and rampant lions, and wearing Irish republican colours together with tartan and kilts, all mixed up in the most horrible blends, indicated in a dramatic and symbolic way that this group was in the process of becoming Scots, albeit of a new, unique and peculiar type.

Another indication that somehow the process of blending and mingling of the migrant groups in Greenock and other places in Lowland Scotland has reached a decisive stage is perhaps to be seen in recent developments in literature. Thus observers and critics speak of a "Scottish Literary Revival"¹ with Hugh MacDiarmid and other poets being very concerned to take account of "their social environment"² and to "speak with our own voice, for our own times through the medium of literature".³ Novelists, too, have shown an increasing awareness of the communities in which they have lived, the works of Neil Gunn and the trilogy of Lewis Grassie Gibbon, for instance, being clearly different in quality and in their insight into Scottish life and character from much that has gone before in Scottish literature.⁴ A very considerable number of novels of varying quality have also appeared about life in Glasgow and other places,⁵ and some

1. The Scottish Literary Revival (London, 1968), Ed. G. Bruce.

2. Ibid., p. 6.

3. Ibid., p. 1.

4. Wittig, op. cit., pp. 330-9.

5. Ibid., p. 323.

of the more recent of these such as The Dear Green Place (London, 1966) by Archie Hind have produced vivid and life-like descriptions of working class life in the city and of the relationships between working class people and other groups and elements in the community. A particularly interesting trend in the Glasgow area, too, is exemplified in the career of such a writer as Clifford Hanley, for instead of rejecting his background like so many of his predecessors, he has clearly and deliberately sought to retain his contacts with working class Glasgow so that he might portray its life and quality more vividly.¹

Of very special significance in the context of this thesis, moreover, is the work of the Greenock writer, Alan Sharp, and particularly his novel, A Green Tree in Gedde.² In this novel which is concerned very largely with Greenock, Sharp displays a rare degree of literary and perceptive ability in his descriptions of the lives of the working classes in the town, and for perhaps the first time they come really alive in a work of imaginative literature. Sharp, it is true, had a very considerable knowledge of Greenock and of the working classes there, but it is fascinating to observe that his advance in life has not apparently cut him off from his earlier and vital experiences, and from the

1. C. Hanley, Dancing in the Streets (London, 1958).

2. A. Sharp, A Green Tree in Gedde (London, 1965).

community in which he lived. Sharp incidentally seems also to have grasped and understood the complex process of migration and assimilation, for he has given a brief and fascinating description of the experiences in the town of one family from the south of Scotland over several generations.¹ It might be contended that this particular writer's insight, if this it be, was due to his own ability and genius, and that the lack of anything comparable in the past has been caused by a dearth of talent; but such a deficiency over such a long period surely argues something deeper and more fundamental, and indeed underlines what was said earlier about a lack of understanding and comprehension on the part of the literati of what was occurring in our Scottish towns and cities.

There seems, therefore, to be a substantial weight of evidence to support the thesis that over the last two hundred years or so there has been occurring a blending and mingling of various races and groups in Lowland Scotland to produce the modern Scot, and that this process has perhaps reached a critical stage in its evolution. It is tempting, moreover, to speculate on the connections that might exist between this phenomenon and the upsurge of nationalism in Scotland in the 1960s. Neither the National Party (founded in 1928) nor the Scottish National Party (1934)

1. Ibid. pp. 28-50.

made much electoral impact during the inter-war years,¹ and despite some success achieved by the Scottish Convention in the years after 1949,² it was not till the early 1960s that the Scottish National Party began to achieve some limited success in elections, culminating in their victory in the Hamilton by-election in November, 1967.³ One cannot be quite certain whether all this represents a real national movement or merely a protest vote, but if indeed a new type of Scot were emerging, then he might well provide a more permanent and effective base for any revival of national feelings. In this context, it is particularly interesting to note that some of the former migrant groups in the community have been accused of or credited with supporting the nationalist cause. Thus while the Nationalists in the 1930s were mainly Protestants⁴ and intellectuals,⁵ and some observers have concluded that the S.N.P. voters in the 1960s have been mainly Protestant non-manual workers,⁶ Professor Hanham has asserted that

1. W. Ferguson, Scotland: 1689 to the Present, pp. 378-9.

2. Ibid., pp. 388-90.

3. Ibid., pp. 395, 400-1; J.G. Kellas, Modern Scotland, pp. 201-6.

4. Ferguson, op. cit., p. 378.

5. Kellas, op. cit., p. 201.

6. Jack Brand, 'These are the Scotnats', in New Statesman, May 17, 1968.

the working class Irish Catholic elements in the Glasgow area have been responsible for the upsurge of support for the Scottish National Party there.¹ If in fact this group is beginning to support the nationalist cause and to feel involved in Scottish questions and issues, then this provides astonishing evidence that something important is taking place and that the process of assimilation and mingling of the groups is indeed reaching a critical stage.

Whether or not all these interesting social and political developments taking place in modern Scotland betoken a new sense of nationalism, however, there can be little doubt whatsoever that a novel type of Scot has been evolving in our industrial towns and cities. In this evolution of the modern Scottish character, all the various groups would have their part to play, but undoubtedly the Highlanders who settled in Greenock and other parts of the Lowlands throughout the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries formed one of the most important ingredients. Their assimilation into the community of Greenock which was discussed in Section II is not, therefore, to be seen as a passive disappearance, but as a blending into an emerging structure to which they themselves made an important contribution. It might not indeed be exaggerating their

1. H.J. Hanham, Scottish Nationalism, p. 21; H.J. Hanham, 'The Scottish Nation Faces the Post Imperial World', in Canadian Institute of International Affairs, Vol. XXIII (No. 4, Autumn 1968), p. 583.

contribution to claim that they had a very special and unique role to play in the new evolving Scotland, the role in fact of providing something essentially and uniquely Scottish, something, that is, which could be clearly and unquestionably recognised as such. It is in this sense perhaps that all the exaggerations of the Celtic twilight romanticisings that blossomed forth during the visit of George IV to Edinburgh in 1822, and all the reverence for tartan and everything Highland that continued on throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth centuries, had much more importance and significance than is sometimes imagined. Without doubt there has been an intolerable mountain of nonsense uttered in this field, but behind it all one can detect a real striving for identity on the part of the people of Lowland Scotland. Increasingly as the social, economic and industrial life of the Scottish towns and cities came to conform to the general British pattern in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, their inhabitants found it more and more difficult to isolate features of their lives which marked them off as different from the English and as distinctively Scottish. In this situation, the modern Scot, becoming conscious and persuaded of his individuality, but finding it increasingly difficult to express and define it in any convincing fashion, has tended to fall back on those aspects of the Highland tradition which were quite unique and clearly distinct from the experiences of the English

and other peoples.

The search for a symbol of Scottish identity was of course a continuing feature of the Scottish scene in the years after 1707, and different objects and aspects of Scottish life were seized upon to satisfy this seemingly deep-rooted need. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, for instance, writers such as Scott found in Scottish history and in a sentimental attachment to Jacobitism "a focus for Scottish national feeling".¹ Perhaps, too, the strong emphasis placed in the nineteenth century Kailyard writers on Scottish rural life and dialect² reflected a desire to stress those aspects of the Scottish scene which still retained some recognisable individuality. None of the aspects of life in Lowland Scotland, however, could provide the clear-cut qualities and characteristics that were available in the Highland tradition, and thus when national pride became associated with the Highland regiments during and after the French Wars, then the old Highland way of life became a reservoir of Scottishness useful to and to be used by the Scot living in the Lowland towns and cities whenever he wished to assert his individuality and identity. That an increasing number of these Lowland Scots were Highland migrants, of Highland

1. Daiches, op. cit., p. 16.

2. Wittig, op. cit., p. 254; G. Blake, Barrie and the Kailyard School (London, 1951).

descent, or in some way linked with the Highlands made the transference of the Highland traditions and ways into the national culture and consciousness all the easier.

Several interesting aspects of the attitudes of the modern Scot in the industrial areas go far to illustrate and support the thesis being presented here. Thus, for instance, such typical representatives of the Highland tradition and myth as the Glasgow Police Pipe Band in their Highland regalia, Highland dancers and Highland athletes are accepted parts of the Lowland scene and are held to be typically and representatively Scottish. On the other hand, the sight of a kilted laird would not be considered so appropriate, at least in the industrial areas of our towns and cities. Such a distinction, one might suggest, does indicate that the Highland myth and tradition is indeed being used to satisfy certain emotional and national needs of the modern Scot.

The part played by the Highland traditions in satisfying the emotional needs of the population in modern Scotland corresponds in a sense to the role occupied by the Wild West in the American and Siberia in the Russian consciousness. In all three countries these respective areas have come to be intimately associated with the well-springs of the national and cultural life, and in all three the myths and legends that have sprung up surrounding these areas have been even more important than the historical reality. Thus where the myths associated with the Wild West have had

a continuing influence on American character, politics and ideals, so, too, the myths and legends surrounding the Highlands as depicted by Scott and other writers have been of great importance in creating a sense of identity and perhaps nationhood in the modern Scot. The whole myth has contained many inaccuracies, but it has performed a prime historical function.

It would appear, therefore, that the modern Scot, the amalgam of several peoples and groups, has been conscious of a sense of identity, but that like all the literary writers of the past two hundred years he has found it difficult to define this identity accurately and with precision. In this situation he has frequently fallen back on those Highland qualities and characteristics, real or mythical, which were relatively distinct and which could not be confused with those of other peoples. Thus it was that the Highland migrants in Greenock and other Lowland towns and cities contributed an essential ingredient to the evolution of the modern Scottish character, for by making easier the transference of the Highland traditions and myths into the general Scottish culture pattern, they enabled the modern Scot to preserve his individuality from assimilation to other cultures south of the Border.

SUMMARY OF THESIS

SUMMARY

This investigation is concerned with all the problems surrounding the migration of peoples from the Highlands into Lowland Scotland in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and in particular the town of Greenock in Renfrewshire. Greenock was readily reached from Argyll and Dunbarton, and probably there were Highland settlers present in the earliest communities formed in the area towards the end of the sixteenth century. Certainly there were considerable numbers of people moving into Greenock from the Highlands during the seventeenth century, so that by 1700 there might have been 70-80 Highlanders, making up about 6% of the population, living in the town. During the eighteenth century, the numbers of Highlanders in the town increased substantially, particularly after about 1750, reaching perhaps 5,100 or between 20-30% of the population in the 1790s. There was a slight fall in the numbers of Highlanders living in Greenock between 1800 and about 1830, but then they began to rise again, reaching a peak of 5178 in 1871. After 1871, however, they fell steadily to 3810 in 1891 and about 1,000 in 1961. Proportionately the Highland element in Greenock was at its largest towards the end of the eighteenth century, with about 29% of the people living in the town

being native-born Highlanders, but thereafter the percentage of Highlanders in the town's population fell steadily to 11.0% in 1851, 6.0% in 1891 and 1.3% in 1961. Before permanent settlement took place, and coincident with it, there were real and growing commercial, ecclesiastical, legal, industrial, personal and social contacts between the Highlands and the Greenock area, and these all made the peoples of the Highlands more familiar with the town and facilitated settlement there.

At all periods the main body of Highland migrants settling in Greenock has come from southern Argyll. In the eighteenth century those coastal areas close to Greenock such as Cowal, the Dunbartonshire parishes of Rhu and Rosneath, and the island of Bute had the highest migration rates, but in the nineteenth century more distant places such as Islay, Jura, Knapdale, Kilmichael Glassary and Lismore came to equal and even surpass the migration rates of those areas closer to Greenock. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Skye and Lewis became increasingly important as areas sending migrants to Greenock.

The migrants from the Highlands settling in Greenock included people from many ranks of society. In the eighteenth century there were Highland tackmen and professional men and several representatives of the landed families of Argyll in the population of Greenock, as well as large numbers of men and women from the lower orders of Highland society.

By the early nineteenth century, the landed classes were not so prominent in the stream of Highland migration to Greenock, but there were still fairly large numbers of more prosperous migrants and professional men arriving in the town from the Highlands in addition to the continuing influx of men and women from the lower ranks of Highland society. Most of the migrants would seem to have been Protestants and Presbyterians, but there were small numbers of Catholic Highlanders and perhaps Episcopalians coming to the town.

In total, there does not appear to have been any great difference in the numbers of men and women coming to Greenock. Up until about 1750 there were probably a larger number of male migrants from the Highlands, but after that date there were always more women than men among the migrants to Greenock. There is, however, a distinction between the areas close to Greenock and the more distant regions. Thus the women migrants from the county of Argyll were invariably in a clear majority, but from the more distant areas such as Inverness, Ross and Cromarty and Sutherland there were in the nineteenth century almost always more men than women coming to settle in the town. There was, however, a marked tendency for the numbers of women migrating from the more distant regions to Greenock to overtake and surpass the numbers of men as these districts developed closer ties and contacts with Greenock.

The pull and influence of Greenock, therefore, appear to have reached out in a phase or wave like pattern over the Highland area, first affecting districts close at hand, and then more distant places within an ever-widening radius in successive periods throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Seemingly, too, the first contacts between a particular area and Greenock were made by Highland men, and at first there would be a majority of men among the migrants to the town. Soon, however, the numbers of female migrants from a particular district would surpass the numbers of men, and this same process would be repeated in more distant regions as they experienced the pull and influence of the town.

THE HIGHLANDERS IN GREENOCK

As they settled in Greenock in numbers during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Highland migrants seem to have adapted themselves quickly to their new lives in the Lowland community. In the first place, they moved smoothly into the existing social structure, and Highlanders were to be found in all groups in the community. There were indeed many men and women from the Highlands to be found among the poorer classes in the town, but the numbers of Highlanders in the various social categories and classes did not differ significantly from the norms of the total population. Several of the migrants, including the

members of the Highland landed families, entered the upper ranks of Greenock society immediately on their arrival, but others, who initially occupied humble posts in the town, were able to rise to more exalted positions.

In their choice of occupation, too, the Highland migrants in Greenock seem to have followed in the main the general patterns of the whole population. True, they seem to have preferred certain types of work and to have avoided particular occupations. Thus in the eighteenth century they were prominent as coopers, carpenters, shoemakers, porters and carmen, in sea-faring activities, and in the Customs service, while they were poorly represented in the trades of wright, mason and flesher. Later, in the nineteenth century, the Highlanders arriving in the town seem to have been particularly reluctant to work in the sugar refineries, and very few of them were employed there. On the other hand, they were present in very large numbers in the police force, in the distilleries, in the gas enterprises, in the merchant marine, and in such trades as carpenter and sawyer. Most probably they were not very amenable to industrial discipline, and where they had the choice they opted for occupations where they could work out of doors, or where their activities were not governed by a rigid, oppressive routine. Highland women, too, had particular preferences, the majority of them making their way into domestic service, or finding

employment in shops or as dressmakers and milliners. They seem to have shunned work in the mills and factories in Greenock, and very few of them were employed in this type of work.

Nevertheless, despite these preferences, the Highlanders did in fact move into a broad range of trades, industries and professions in Greenock, and in both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries they were fairly well represented in almost every occupation and sphere of work in the town. Moreover, though the police force and the trade of carpenter in Greenock had a very large percentage of Highlanders for most of the nineteenth century, these were by no means dominated or controlled by the Highland migrants. Thus it was that in their occupation choice, as well as in the social status they secured in their new environment, the Highlanders in Greenock did not establish significantly different patterns from those of the general population. Clear and distinct preferences they certainly did have, but these were not perhaps sufficiently developed and generalised to set them apart from other migrant groups and from the local-born population.

Nor were the Highland migrants in Greenock set apart in a physical sense in a particular ghetto or district of the town. Certainly there were pockets of Highlanders living clustered together in different parts of the town, for the Highland migrants liked to live close to their

fellow countrymen and people from their home areas. Thus in the eighteenth century, one of the streets in Greenock was known as the 'Highland Close' since so many Highlanders had made their homes there, and the Mid Parish seems to have had proportionately more Highlanders than the West Parish. In the nineteenth century, too, the census returns would indicate that there were certain districts where Highlanders congregated. Nevertheless, once again this trend was not strong enough to offset the opposing tendency for the Highland migrants to spread themselves throughout the town and community, and Highlanders were to be found in each and every district in the town, and in all categories and sizes of houses and housing. The Highlanders, too, were subject to all the diseases that struck down the populations living in the towns of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Perhaps they were more prone to suffer from small pox since many of them were not vaccinated, but there was little apparent difference between their rates of mortality and the diseases they contracted and those of the general population. Nor seemingly were the Highlanders afflicted with any special or uniquely strong criminal tendencies, for there was no evidence that they committed any more offences than did other groups in the community.

In the spheres of religion, education, politics, and social and cultural life, too, the experiences of the Highlanders in Greenock followed along lines similar to those of

the general community. It is true that they did establish specifically Highland institutions in their Gaelic Churches, the Highlanders' Academy and Gaelic Schools, the Greenock Highland Society, and the Celtic Shinty Club, but these were never sufficiently exclusive or all-embracing in their enrolment of the Highland migrants to set them apart from the rest of the community. Only a minority of the Highlanders actually joined them, the remainder preferring to remain aloof or to become members of the ordinary churches, schools or societies in the town. There was perhaps a tendency for the Highlanders to favour the Established Church congregations, and after the Disruption, the Free Church congregations, but they were also present in numbers in every denomination and congregation in the town. Large numbers of the working class Highlanders in the nineteenth century lost contact with the churches altogether, even as many of the working class in the general population were doing at this time.

In the main, moreover, the Highlanders were often very active in the various community activities in Greenock. Many of them served as local councillors and officials, and one as M.P. in the nineteenth century, and although they appear to have favoured the Whig and Liberal causes, in this they were sharing in the common enthusiasms of the town. Highlanders were also active in the Employers' Associations and in the early trade unions in the town, and there is some reason to believe that the Highland workers were rather more militant

than has sometimes been assumed. Numbers of Highlanders also served in the local Volunteers in the late eighteenth century and in the second half of the nineteenth century, and in 1859 a Highland Rifle Corps was formed in the town. Highland migrants were also active in the literary fields as writers, printers, publishers, booksellers, and as 'consumers' of literary culture. They were especially prominent in the writing of local history, but otherwise they would seem to have played a role proportional to their numbers in these various fields. In the cultural and social life of the town as exemplified in such societies as the Philosophical Society, the Watt Club, and the Society of Free Masons, the Highland migrants and their descendants seem to have played a very considerable role.

The progress of the Highland migrants into all spheres and activities of local society, however, was not effected without some opposition or resistance. There was in fact a good deal of prejudice against the newcomers from the Highlands, ranging from downright hostility and dislike to the telling of comic stories making fun of them. Nevertheless, there was also a considerable fund of good will towards the Highlanders in the town, especially as the movement glorifying and romanticising the Highlands gained strength in the nineteenth century. This made it easier for the Highland migrants to accommodate themselves to the ways and customs of their new environment, and together with the

manner in which the Highlanders participated in the life and work of the community helped to bring about a rapid assimilation of the newcomers. Some 60% of the Highland migrants in the nineteenth century did marry partners born in the Highlands, indicating that they were a clearly defined group in Greenock, but the fact that more than one-third found partners from other areas made for a mixed, highly assimilated population in the next generation. In effect, the second generation Highlanders were to all intents and purposes Lowlanders, with only a very small number of them clinging to the customs and traditions of the Highlands, and only a very small percentage speaking Gaelic. Many of the sons of the Highland migrants, moreover, rose rapidly to higher positions in the social and occupational scales, indicating perhaps that they were eager to take advantage of the educational facilities available and that they were fully accepting the mores and conventions of the local community.

So complete indeed was the assimilation of the Highland migrants, and so thoroughly did the children of the Highlanders become Lowlanders and abandon the Gaelic language and Highland ways, that it would appear that many of the Highlanders were deliberately rejecting their Highland background. They were urged to do this by several of their social leaders and Highland ministers, but large numbers of the migrants also rejected the leadership of the more prosperous classes and the

ministers along with the rest of their Highland background. Perhaps the speed with which the Highland migrants were assimilated indicated and was a consequence of a malaise and break-down in the structure of Highland society. The leaders and the upper classes had so lost faith in the Highland past and traditions that they regarded Lowland and English culture as superior, while the ordinary Highlanders found themselves faced with problems for which their society had no answers.

FACTORS CAUSING MIGRATION FROM THE HIGHLANDS

The analysis and examination of the experiences of the Highland migrants in Greenock and the pattern of migration displayed by the Highlanders moving to the town underlined the importance of economic factors in causing the movement of peoples from the Highlands. Clearly many of the migrants were motivated by a desire to escape distress in the Highlands or to take advantage of the better occupational opportunities available in Greenock. Nevertheless, it is apparent that there were also important social and other factors involved. Thus there were many aspects of Highland society such as the narrow and restricted community life and the over censorious moral standards, especially in the strict Presbyterian areas in the nineteenth century, which aroused discontent among many of its members and encouraged

numbers of them to quit their homes. The social structure of many Highland communities, too, was of a largely undifferentiated nature, and there was little scope for the energetic and the ambitious to utilise their talents. These conditions existed, moreover, at a time when the Highlanders were becoming increasingly aware of the attractions of other societies through education, correspondence from earlier migrants, visits from returning migrants and from servants accompanying touring parties, and other media. Thus the lure of the Lowlands and other areas combined with the increasing pressures at home to convince many Highlanders that their society had no answer to its or their problems, and that their only opportunity for a richer and fuller life lay elsewhere. Once the process of migration had been well established, moreover, it came to be almost self-perpetuating and self-supporting, for the demographic structures that resulted from the first waves of migration served to make continuing migration almost inevitable. Children had to go to the Lowlands, for example, to help maintain their parents on their small holdings, and their subventions in turn came to make a continuance of an ageing Highland society possible. The resulting reductions in the numbers of individuals in the lower age groups also seriously limited the social life and community activities, as well as the opportunities for marriage, and thus again the push towards migration was

intensified. Migration, therefore, became an established and accepted way of life and part of the Highland scene. Highland parents assumed that a number of their children would leave their home areas, and the children themselves understood that this would some day be their fate. It indeed became almost a sign of maturity and the fulfilment of a Highland child's destiny that he should follow in the footsteps of the countless numbers who had left the Highlands before him to seek employment and a new life in other environments.

Some indication of the relative importance of the push/pull factors involved in the Highland situation can be obtained from an analysis of the various patterns of migration to Greenock and of the general changes in population in different parts of the Highlands in the period 1755-1891. Thus it would appear that there was a general influence exerted by the Lowlands that spread out over the Highland area with diminishing intensity as the distance from the main centres and towns increased, but that local conditions and developments in the Highlands could also be extremely important and could impose very considerable distortions and changes in the migratory patterns. Certain areas in the Highlands, moreover, came to establish close and special ties with particular towns and districts in the Lowlands, and these associations also helped to influence the rates of migration from particular areas. Research into such connections

between Lowland towns other than Greenock and specific Highland areas, together with research into the special influences which produced individual migratory patterns in certain Highland districts might well deepen our understanding of the factors that caused migration from the Highlands.

IMPACT ON GREENOCK AND THE LOWLANDS

The Highland migrants who settled in Greenock and other parts of the Lowlands in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries contributed a very great deal to the life of their new communities. In the first place, the large numbers of skilled and semi-skilled workers from the Highlands, together with the Highland merchants and commercial leaders who settled in Greenock, played an important part in the development of its commerce and industry. Indeed, it is probably true to say that without the influx of the Highland migrants into Greenock and other towns in the neighbourhood in the late eighteenth century, the economic and industrial development of the town and the Clyde Region might have been seriously stunted or held back. In their relative failure to form deep roots in their new environments in Greenock and other parts of the Lowlands, however, and with their typical migrants' mentality and outlook, the settlers from the Highlands helped to create a climate of opinion favourable to an extensive type economy. Thus in modern times the emphasis in Scotland

has by and large been on the exploitation of the country's resources and the opportunities inherent in a world-wide Empire rather than on the intensive development of such towns as Greenock and the general habitat of the country.

In the social and community life of Greenock, too, the Highland migrants had a considerable impact. They added a large number of surnames and Christian names to the stock of the town's population, and several of the local streets came to be called after prominent migrants. They also probably helped consolidate several attitudes and traits of character associated with the local population, while they introduced Highland Games and Dancing, and helped to make whisky drinking a dominant feature in the social life of the town's inhabitants. Their lack of experience in living in urban areas, too, was undoubtedly a contributory factor in creating the alums of Greenock and other towns in the area, but migrants from other regions and countries were equally unsophisticated in town living and equally guilty in this respect. There is, moreover, no evidence to suggest that the Highlanders significantly increased the incidence of crime or of any of the major diseases that afflicted the population in the nineteenth century. There were proportionately more blind persons among the Highland migrants than in the other groups in the town, but much more research would be required in this and related fields before one could conclude that they introduced any specific

factors into the physical make-up of the town's population. Rather surprisingly, too, the Highland migrants seem to have made little dramatic impact on the dialect and language of the locality. They did, however, add considerably to the cultural and religious life of the community, while in the Volunteer Movement in the second half of the nineteenth century their influence became in fact a dominant one. Their settlement in the town also had the effect of linking Greenock more closely to southern Argyll and the Western Islands, and of creating many close ties between the town and the peoples of these regions.

The Highland migrants in Greenock and in other parts of the Lowlands have also comprised a very important ingredient in the amalgam of peoples that have gone to make up the modern population of Scotland. In the Lowlands a new type of Scot has been evolving out of this amalgam of peoples and groups, and so complex has been the process that it has defied analysis by commentators and literary writers. The modern Scot himself has been in a similar position, for although conscious of a sense of identity, he has normally been unable to define it accurately and with precision. In this situation, therefore, he has frequently fallen back on those Highland qualities and characteristics, real or mythical, which were relatively distinct and which could not be confused with those of other peoples. Thus it was that the Highland migrants in

Greenock and other Lowland towns and cities contributed an essential element in the evolution of the modern Scottish character, for by making easier the transference of the Highland traditions and myths into the general Scottish culture pattern, they enabled the modern Scot to preserve his individuality from assimilation to other cultures south of the Border.